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ANTIOCH:

OR,

INCREASE OF MORAL POWER

IN THE

CHURCH OF CHRIST.

BY

REV. PHARCELLUS CHURCH,

AUTHOR OF PRIZE ESSAYS ON "RELIGIOUS DISSENSIONS,"
"PHILOSOPHY OF BENEVOLENCE," ETC.

WITH AN

INTRODUCTORY ESSAY,

BY

REV. BARON STOW,

PASTOR OF BALDWIN PLACE CHURCH, BOSTON.

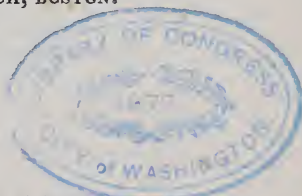
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P R E F A C E .

THIS work contains the ideas, in an expanded form, of an Address on Commencement week, before a subsidiary organization of the Hamilton Theological Seminary. The author was subsequently honored with the following request : "Resolved, that Rev. Pharcellus Church be requested to furnish this Association, for the purpose of publication, a copy of an Address delivered by him before its last anniversary."

This request I declined, because I could not bring myself to speak on the subject from the press, till I had carried out my thinking on some of its points to a greater extent. I have since given myself more than three years reflection upon it, and the result is, I am satisfied as to the main track of investigation, however much I may be dissatisfied with the particular mode of my prosecuting it. Had nothing but style or manner been at issue, I should have yielded to the solicitations of my friends and published long ago. But so long as the Divine Spirit withheld from me the illumination necessary to a satisfactory

understanding of principles at the basis of my subject, and the cloud was not "lifted up from off the tabernacle," how could I go forward?

Though I have omitted from this work the details of practical religion, it must not be construed into an undervaluation of them, as a means of moral power to the church. Far otherwise. To repress in any way the aspirings of the new-born affections after holiness of life, is like enfeebling by means of bad food, bad clothing and defective pay, the army on which an empire relies for propping its throne and extending its dominions. Young Christians are the sacramental host to extend the arms of Immanuel in a coming generation, and to subject them to a sickly and enfeebling regimen, is to subtract from the effective force by which the Christianity of coming ages is to act against the giant evils of the world. Through the blessing of God and by the favor of the public, we may hereafter, under another form, speak also on this part of our subject.

Rochester, March, 1843.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE Author of the following treatise is favorably known to the religious public as an original thinker and a forcible writer. His two principal works, entitled "Philosophy of Benevolence," and "Prize Essay on Religious Dissensions," have been read by many with profit; and though they may not, like some other productions upon the same or kindred subjects, have been extensively popular, yet the important principles which they vigorously inculcate have found a genial home in many minds, where they are working out results in individual character of the most salutary kind—results which are strongly conservative as well as impulsive in their influence upon the activities and the spirit of a more intelligent class of the sons of Zion. If such works shall, either in the present or the succeeding generation, pass away among the neglected and forgotten, it will not be because they are "behind the times"—for that is the last condemnation to which they can possibly be obnoxious—but rather because they are superseded by others whose standard of Christian excellence is far less elevated, whose captivations of style render them more attractive, and whose shallowness of thought makes them more acceptable to

an age that reads only as it runs, and reads that it may run the faster.

It is good—it is refreshing, to meet with a book—be it great or small—of modern authorship, which, while it countenances and encourages Progress—accelerated Progress in all good things—supplies the true principles by which that Progress is to be impelled and governed, so as to reach, not only most expeditiously but most wisely and most safely the best termination. Such, in one department, is the object of the comprehensive treatise which this article introduces and commends to the candid attention of “the household of faith.” The subject of which it treats in its brief chapters—Increase of Moral Power in the Church of Christ—will readily strike every thoughtful Christian as possessing an importance beyond the ordinary range of religious questions, and as entitled to careful, meditative consideration. The author probably does not expect that all minds will come at once to his own point of observation, and view every part of the subject in the same light that he does, or in the same state of the intellectual and moral faculties. In some particulars, neither his philosophy nor his interpretative application of certain passages of Scripture, may be altogether satisfactory ; because, when tried by that “form of doctrine” in which the reader was long since theologically moulded, they may not be found to wear the favorite “image and superscription.” Both the rigid Augustinian and the flexible Pelagian will be dissatisfied that their uninspired dogmas are so unceremoniously set at naught ; and the inveterate ultraists of every school, whether “old” or “new,” whether “supra” or “subter,” will be surprised to see how effectually an independent thinker can hew a highway intermediate between the Jerusalem and the Gerizim of their cherished orthodoxies. Possibly, too,

some of the more moderate may occasionally hesitate, and reserve for further examination the question touching the legitimacy of a few of the Author's positions.

But, whatever may be thought of some of the minor details of the discussion, it will not be denied that very important practical principles are here evolved and set in a strong light; nor will it be doubted that the tendency of the work, as a whole, must be favorable to the advancement of a most desirable object. It is manifestly the product of that peculiar revival spirit by which the author has been surrounded and penetrated; and it is not difficult to foresee that it will encounter the fewest objectors, and be the most warmly welcomed where the same spirit has prevailed in its greatest purity and power. It is considerably in advance of the great body of the Christian host, and will find its sympathetic chords especially in those who, "forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before," in a scriptural way "press toward the mark for the prize" of their "high calling," earnestly desirous, both as to personal holiness and useful efficiency, to "apprehend that for which they also are apprehended of Christ Jesus."

The Duty to be useful to the largest possible extent in the advancement of religion, is imposed upon the Christian Church, not only by positive command, but by all the relations which she sustains to her exalted Head, and to the "world which lieth in the wicked One." No consideration but absolute impotency, or a direct countermand from her King, or an entire change of her spiritual relations, can release her, or any of her constituent portions from this comprehensive obligation. And it would not be difficult to show that in this arrangement there is a wise and benevolent regard to the highest welfare of

the Church as well as of the world for whose recovery to holiness and to heaven she is required to pray, and labor, and deny herself, and sometimes suffer. O when will the Church of Jesus perceive the direction in which lies her true interest, and practically realize that to enjoy in its fulness the benediction of her Lord, she must make him her Pattern—she must “follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth!”

The Desire to be useful, and useful to *souls*, is connatural to the Christian character. It is one of the earliest throbbings of the “new heart;” and as it is clearly indicative of “newness of life,” so it is uniformly found, that as the child of God advances toward “the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ,” this desire is sure to

“Grow with his growth, and strengthen with his strength.”

In Christ, our Model, it existed in perfection; and it increases in the believer just in proportion as his character, inward and outward, acquires conformity to that of his incarnate Lord. And thus we are furnished with a valuable test by which to try the piety of those who profess to have made large attainments in Christian Holiness. Do they selfishly make their own hearts the focal point of all good, and consume their whole time and resources in feeding the altar-fires of inward and pent-up enjoyment; or do their thoughts and solitudes and sympathies go out in quest of the perishing, and, like him who “came not to be ministered unto but to minister,” do they endeavor “to seek and to save that which is lost?” When they would lay themselves in channels along which flow the waters “clear as crystal,” is it solely that they may be refreshed and happy; or also that they may be invigorated for holier and more effective service?

When, in their frequented and worn "kneeling-place" they lift their cry, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me," is it merely because God has said that without holiness no man shall see him; or is it also that they may be the undefiling conveyancers of influence from the Upper Reservoir to the suffering "round about" them? When they pray, individually or jointly, gently or vociferously, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free Spirit," is it that they may be better qualified to teach transgressors God's ways, and so have an agency in their conversion? In their desires for a "deepening of the work of grace" in their own hearts, and in their efforts to cultivate the constituent graces that compose, in their harmonious development, the "beauty of holiness," have they regard to something without themselves—something higher than self can compass, and for the accomplishment of which they need an "increase of Moral Power?"—such an increase as results only from genuine Moral Improvement? When they have their sweetest seasons at their devotions,

"And Heaven comes down their souls to greet,
Beneath the blood-bought Mercy-seat,"

have they the clearest views of the condition and prospects of the impenitent, and are they the most heavily "burdened" with intense anxiety for their conversion to God, so that they can sympathize with the holy Apostle who had "great heaviness and continual sorrow in his heart," and could cheerfully submit to any sacrifice—even to be "accursed from Christ," for the sake of sinners whose salvation he desired? John Knox was overheard pleading in tones of agony, "Give me Scotland, or I die!" Is their piety of such a fibre, clinging with a death-grasp to the Angel of the Covenant, and refusing a

denial? Do they, under the influence of their best feelings, go forth into the "briery and brambly world" upon enterprises of mercy, and are the "highways and hedges" witnesses to their self-denying and unwearied efforts to "compel" the unbidden to come in and fill that house where "all things are ready," and where even the "hired servants have bread enough and to spare?"

It is doubtless an universal truth, that the Christian disciple who has the most of the Spirit of his Master is the most earnestly desirous to be useful in the conversion and sanctification of his fellow men; and it is quite as true, that, other things being equal, his ability to do good is greatest. Lives there an intelligent being in heaven, earth or hell who does not know that HOLINESS IS POWER? And if the inquiry pertain to the individual Christian, or to a community of believers ecclesiastically organized, or to the aggregate of the truly converted, broadly styled The Church, "How can Moral Power be increased to the greatest possible extent?" the honest answer from all worlds is, "By the greatest possible increase of Holiness."

The term Power, when predicated of a Christian, is necessarily used in a qualified and subordinate sense, widely different from the acceptation in which we employ it with respect to his Almighty Ally, the Holy Spirit. We mean by it, not the inherent ability of an independent agent, but rather the possession of those qualities which adapt him, by active effort, to the accomplishment of a given object. There is doubtless such a thing as adaptation to usefulness in the advancement of religion in the souls of men, and this renders the Christian in whom it exists, a suitable agent, from whose well-directed exertions certain results may be rationally expected. This

adaptation, we suppose, may not improperly be denominated Power.

Yet it is not the adaptation of an Instrument—a term which ought never to be applied, as it should never be applicable to the Christian—for it denotes what a moral being should never be—something inert and passive, and capable of being useful only as it is *used* by an intelligent agent. It has no intention, and is responsible for nothing. Such should not be—such is not the Christian. The Lord of the harvest does not use his reaper as that reaper uses his sickle—a mere instrument—but he employs him as an agent, an active being, capable of using the instrumentality which has been appointed and adapted to the production of intended results; and for the faithful discharge of this duty he is held responsible, with considerations attached, by way of reward and penalty, of the most solemn import. He has the faculty of speech, by means of which he can modify the views, awaken the feelings, influence the decisions, and shape the character and conduct of others. He has the control of his own actions, and by their character and direction he can make impressions upon the minds of his fellow-beings,—impressions whose efficiency for good or for evil shall be as important as is the well-being of souls, and as permanent as their immortality. He is placed in certain relations to the Source of infinite power and “all grace,” through the medium of which he can obtain for himself and others the greatest of all blessings; for to him it is said from above, “Call upon me, and I will answer, and show thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not.” He is therefore regarded and treated by his Lord as an agent, endowed with ability to be useful, and as furnished with all needed facilities for the increase of that ability to an extent whose limits have never yet

been defined, and as therefore responsible for such an increase and such an application of his ability as shall make him useful to the largest possible degree.

The simple question that is especially pertinent at this point, relates to the most effectual means by which the power of the Church of Christ for useful purposes may be increased. Much might be said of Talent as Power, and of Knowledge as Power, and of Cultivation as Power ; but far more can be said, not only as fair inference from Sacred History, but as the result of actual experience in every age of the Church, that, pre-eminently, Holiness is Power ;—and we greatly misconceive if the crying want of the Church of Christ at the present moment, with special reference to her high mission, which is but the perpetuity of the mission of him who said, “As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you,” is not so much talent, or intelligence, or any of the helps which are earth-born, as a large increase of that Holiness which consists, not in a morbid contemplatism, or in sentimental fervors, but in a sober practical conformity of the individual members to the will of God. Let her be composed of such as are “rooted and built up in Christ,” living the lives which they live in the flesh “by the faith of the Son of God,” and daily adding virtue to their faith, and knowledge to their virtue, and temperance to their knowledge, and patience to their temperance, and godliness to their patience, and brotherly kindness to their godliness, and Charity as the crowning quality of all, and her Moral Power *will be* increased. Let her members be all that the precepts of the gospel require them to be, and all that the provisions of the gospel, received by faith, would enable them to be, and her ability to do good will be at once and amazingly augmented. Let her members dwell near to their Lord, and as he breathes upon them, “receive the

Holy Ghost," so as to be "filled with the Spirit," and she will find herself "endued with Power from on high," needing no longer to "tarry in Jerusalem," but fully girded for the world's speedy conquest.

The great Evil to be overcome is Sin. What but Holiness is its proper antagonist? The persons to be benefited are sinners. Who but holy men can essentially benefit them? The character of the agency must be adapted to the nature of the object to be accomplished. That object—the recovery of lost sinners to holiness and heaven—is pre-eminently spiritual, and he who would most efficiently promote it must himself be "spiritually-minded." How feeble were the primitive Christians before the day of Pentecost; how timid, inconstant, ineffective! After the Divine Influence came upon them, and such wonderful changes were wrought in their personal piety, how bold were they, how resolute, how patient, how persevering! How extraordinary was their power of endurance, their power of overcoming obstacles, their power of developing and enforcing Divine truth, their power of argument, their power of appeal! "Strengthened with might in the inner man," they went forth with the weapons which are "mighty through God," assaulting the strongest holds of sin, grappling with Satan's veteran phalanxes, and winning for their Prince a thousand bloodless victories. How soon and how surely did the nations feel and confess the power of these evangelical giants. Aiming at a holy end, influenced by holy motives, governed by a holy rule; divinely illuminated, supported, protected, they said what no others could say, they did what no others could do, they endured what no others could endure; and, passing from province to province, we hear them ever and anon exclaiming, "Thanks be unto God who ALWAYS causeth

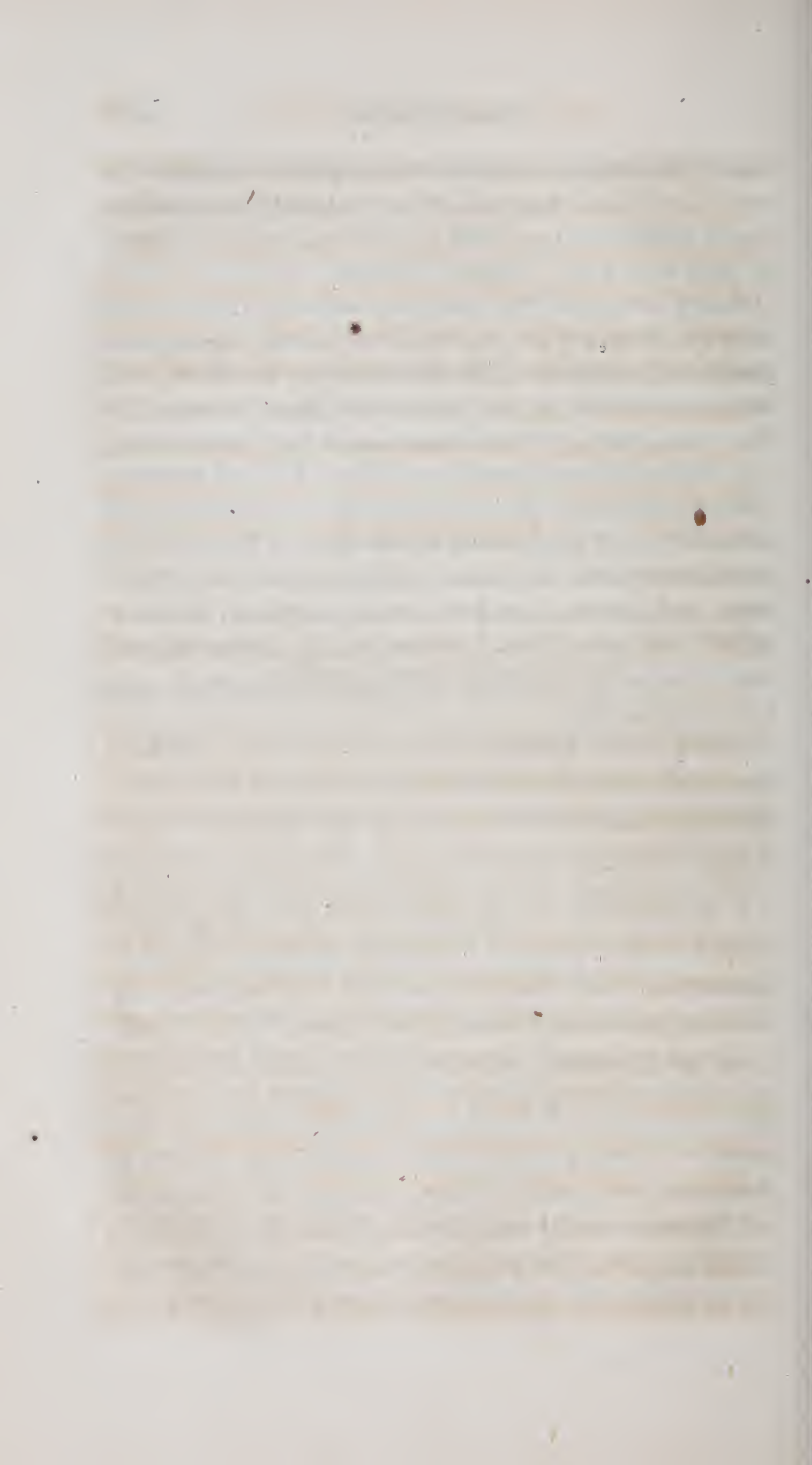
us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge by US IN EVERY PLACE."

Let the Christians of our day be such in Moral Character as were the primitive disciples, and then may they be such in Moral Power. Then will they be so spiritual as to be fitted to the achievement of spiritual conquests. Then will they have that *sympathy* with their object which will make them feel that they are identified with it, and will lead them to consecrate to its accomplishment their undivided and untiring energies. Sympathy is Power. Then will they be the subjects of a *faith* under the influence of which they shall "out of weakness be made strong," so as to be able to accomplish what would otherwise be impracticable. "All things," said Jesus, "are possible to him that believeth." Faith is Power. Then too will they be deeply imbued with that *affectionate spirit* which shall render their manner winning, and their spirit melting. Their words, bathed in their hearts' sensibility, shall soften whatever they touch, and souls, hard and cold as the Alpine glacier, shall dissolve under their influence like wax in the rays of the summer sun. Love is Power. And then, above all, will they be better qualified than now for the *work of intercession*. Our heavenly Advocate is a prevailing Pleader because he is "Jesus Christ THE RIGHTEOUS," for there, as elsewhere, Holiness is Power. Jacob had "power with God and prevailed;" and so had Moses, and Elijah, and Isaiah, and Daniel, as well as the Apostles, and the legitimate conclusion from facts as well as testimony is, that "The effectual fervent prayer of the RIGHTEOUS MAN availeth much." Prayer is Power; and they who get the nearest to the throne, and enjoy with him that sitteth thereon the most familiar and endeared communion, have the most of that mysterious influence; for to such God has in his condescension

said, "Concerning the work of my hands command ye me." And Jesus has said, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." Prayer is Power.

Every element of character that enters into the composition of Holiness is an element of Moral Power, and just in proportion as these elements are developed and strengthened will be the Increase of Moral Power. To this point, then, let the Church, in all her departments, give immediate and earnest attention. Let her welcome the conviction, and let the conviction be practical, that her ability to do good is in proportion, not to her numbers, not to her wealth, not to her intelligence, but to her Holiness; and that until she has a large increase of Holiness in both her ministry and her membership, she has no reason to expect the universal triumph of the cause of truth and righteousness.

B. S.



INCREASE OF MORAL POWER.

CHAPTER I.

SIMPLICITY OF THE GOSPEL IN ITS END, AND IN ITS MEASURES OF REFORM.

THERE is no desire in the human heart which so much assimilates to God, as that of increasing the happiness by improving the virtue of mankind. Unlike those animal sympathies possessed in common by the good and the bad, which impel to the relief of suffering without regard to amending the character of the sufferer, this desire unites with a benevolent interest in the diffusion of happiness, the severe justice of denying the right of it to any, except those who are willing to conform themselves to the requisitions of holiness and truth. Hence, it is an emanation of heaven itself, where love, instead of being a blind impulse, is so blended with equity and law, as to constitute that quality which is singled out

before all others, in those exalted ascriptions of praise, which consist in crying holy, holy, holy.

Whence therefore, could the heart of man, so much the victim of lawless impulses and so little schooled in the principles of immutable right, have acquired the mysterious impulse which has given being to those organized plans of persuasion, for turning men from sin to holiness, upon which there has been so vast an expenditure of treasure and talent, of labor and life. Nothing of the kind is to be found among the proudest and most benign projects of unevangelized mind. The brightest names of Grecian and Roman history, give no evidence of an attempt to direct their philanthropy into channels so extraordinary. Which of the philosophers had his disciples perambulating the states of Greece or the provinces of Rome, to expend upon the mass of the people the arts of a bland and persuasive eloquence, to induce in them the choice of love for hatred, of humility for pride, and of holiness for sin, as the sole means of unburdening them of their woes and raising them to the summit of temporal prosperity and to eternal life? Was it Plato? Seneca? Socrates?

Let the gladiatorial shows, the wars of innocent captives with the beasts of the amphitheatre, and all the deeds of cruelty and blood, which were enacted for the entertainment of these sages

and the polite circles in which they moved, utter their facts on this subject, that it may be seen how remote from the purest and brightest visions of the human mind, apart from heavenly light, are those plans of reformation which contemplate relieving the mass of mankind of their woes, by dispossessing them of the demons of pride, of lust, of fraud and of every abomination. Ay, these are plans at which infidels may find it convenient to sneer, since they have no arguments with which to disprove the impress of a Divine original, which they carry on their bold front. Even had failure attended the enterprise, and the voice of persuasive love had won no convert to such a mode of being happy, yet the bare attempt evinces a heavenly origin, since it is so much above any thing the greatest and best of this world had ever conceived.

It was the *object* upon which Jesus and his apostles had fixed, that determined their choice of *measures*. Embattled legions were unavailable to the work of bringing men to the unconstrained choice of virtue for vice, of truth for falsehood, of God for the world. Is physical force, under any of its possible forms, a fitting instrument to control the human will?

Moreover the peculiar *nature* of the control which they undertook to exercise over the will, still further restricted them in their choice of ex-

pedients. Could sinners be won to humility by feeding their pride ; or to benevolence by an appeal to their selfishness ? Did not those who were attracted by the loaves and fishes, soon go away to walk no more with Christ ? Had worldly titles, pecuniary rewards, glittering insignia, posthumous distinctions and all the pomp and circumstance of earthly greatness, been held up in the gospel to invite the hopes of mankind, they would have defeated the ends of its reformation. In aspect, its author must be the poorest of the poor, his associates the offscouring of all things, his service a self-denying and cross-bearing one, and the way to which he invited men, must be the way every where spoken against. The young nobleman's incipient tendencies to discipleship, must be repressed by restrictions which his otherwise amiable but avaricious feelings could not brook ; and the royal Herod's curiosity to see the great miracle-worker must be turned into contempt and ridicule, by silence and inaction. Such is the nature of the reformation at which the gospel aims, as to require an excision of carnal feelings reached forth to take hold of it, as the sailor would chop off the hand which is grappling his ship with a view of boarding it.

Evangelical reform, therefore, is as excellent in its object, as it is peculiar in its means. Had it proposed an increase of our resources of wealth,

mechanical skill, knowledge of diseases or the modes of their cure, or had any earthly interest been the great end which it had in view, it might have united physical with moral power, taken advantage of the various forms of human selfishness, and thus modelled its policy after the kingdoms of this world. As a system, Christianity assumes that its own incorporation with the affections of mankind—directing the desires, controlling the motives, fixing the principles, exalting the aspirations, kindling the hopes and bringing the soul into sublime communion with God—is the only cure of the evils, moral, civil, intellectual and even physical, which infest the human character and condition.

Upon this object, Jesus and his apostles expended the labor of their lives and the last drop of their martyred blood. HE came to seek and save, not the lost to science, nor the lost to the arts of civil policy or domestic life, nor the lost to health and temporal prosperity ; but the lost to holiness and to God. *They* followed in his footsteps and made it the undivided aim of their lives to enthrone God in the affections of the soul. The language of one develops the policy of all : Though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant of all that I might *gain* the more ; that is, gain their minds to truth, their hearts to holiness and their services to Christ. And unto

the Jews, I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law: to them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak. I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

These arts of a persuasive adaptation, open to a field of exhaustless enterprise, inviting the cultivation of all the redeemed on earth, from the least to the greatest of them. It is an enterprise that finds a congenial chord in every converted soul. The husband and wife, the parent and child, the brother and sister, the ruler and subject, and all, however related to each other or to general society, as well as those who minister at the altar, become pledged by the vows of their consecration, to exert the utmost of their ability in winning all hearts to the service of their Master. Can we, therefore, overrate the importance of being skilled in Christian persuasion, or place too high an estimate on the moral power of the church to the interests of mankind?

CHAPTER II.

NATURE OF MORAL POWER—ANALYSIS OF IT AS
EXISTING IN THE CHURCH—TENDENCY OF EX-
PERIMENTAL RELIGION.

Moral power, in its most comprehensive sense, is the influence of mind over mind, or the capability which one possesses for giving direction to the sentiment and conduct of another. And it is good or bad, according as it is used in favor of virtue and truth, or otherwise. It is on the strength of moral power, that the infidel relies for the infusion of his poison, as well as the Christian for the propagation of his faith. Yea, it is this that ensures for the sentiment and practice of one generation, a transmission to its successor on the busy theatre of the world.

As to its existence, there can be no doubt. All our arts and efforts of persuasion, our books, plans of education, judicial and legislative pleadings and impleadings, and various measures for controlling the voluntary decisions of mankind, are based in the assumption that there is this power of mind over mind. Between intellectual and moral natures, it answers to the

reciprocal action and reaction that binds material bodies together. The particles cohering in the same rock or tree, are chained to each other by the most intimate and mysterious affinities. Not an orb of immensity, also, but may claim its share of influence in making our globe what it is, and in describing its track through the ethereal expanse. And, as we rise from unorganized nature, to the principle of life existing in vegetables and upwards, we find still more subtle bonds of coherence. The blade of corn, springing up alone, denies its fruit, because no kindred blade is near to supply the fructifying energy. Among fishes, quadrupeds and fowls, also, some element of animal sympathy binds them in schools, droves and flocks, and no one would be complete without his kindred. Similar affinities extend to intellectual natures, and the term moral power may include all the principles of connexion and coherence between them, and especially those by means of which they exercise a mutual control over each other's voluntary determinations.

I apply the term *church* to all truly converted persons. And when I speak of moral power among them, I refer to the agency which they exert for their own mutual sanctification and in the regeneration of sinners. By analyzing this agency, it will be found to include, in addition to

the ordinary influence of man with man, that of revealed truth and the Holy Spirit. Though nothing may appear in the conversion and sanctification of sinners, but the ordinary means of suasion, yet a close inspection of the facts in the case, will reveal to us these several influences all blended in one.

That the simple influence of mind over mind, unaided by the word of truth, cannot produce those particular effects which are involved in a sinner's conversion to holiness, is proved by the fact that they have never existed where the Bible has not reflected its light. Were the emotions of evangelical repentance, faith, or love, ever kindled by means of the Koran, the philosophy of Plato, or any other system of religious or philosophical belief? No: how can we believe in him of whom we have not heard, or exercise the emotions which depend upon a certain order of facts, when these facts have never been made known to us?

And the word of truth, as contained in the documents which inspired men have left us, without living agents to translate, preach, explain and enforce them, cannot be to any extent efficient in conversions. It is by the foolishness of *preaching*, an exercise implying the presence of a living agent in enforcing divine truth, that God has determined to save them that believe. And that

the Holy Spirit does supply some element of efficiency, in addition to the foregoing, in order to the conversion of sinners, is clearly taught by our Saviour, when he directs his disciples to tarry at Jerusalem, till they should be endued with *power from on high*. I have planted, Apollos watered; but *God gave the increase*. It is this divine agent, that he promises as the permanent gift of his church, to remain with her *forever*.

Indeed, the concurrence of these several elements of efficiency, in God's plan of reform, is distinctly recognized in such passages as the following: *Whom* we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man; that *we* may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: Striving according to *his working* which worketh in *us* mightily. Here we have, first, the living preacher denoted by the pronouns *we* and *us*, employing the ordinary influence of man with man; second, the word of truth included in the "*whom*," or Christ Jesus, whose character, history and work furnished the theme of his preaching; and third, the Spirit's influence as manifested in the power that wrought in him mightily.

Now, these several elements of power meet in all truly converted persons, for a man cannot be converted short of this result. He has some degree of influence over the voluntary decisions of

his fellow-men, or he would be too low in the scale of being to be capable of such a work ; his mind is furnished with some knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, for faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God ; and he has besides a measure of the Spirit to profit withal, for the Spirit divideth to every man severally as he will. That errors in doctrine and practice are intermixed among these converts, affords no reason for excluding them from our consideration ; especially as it is the humble endeavor of these pages, to remove from them so serious a clog to their influence both with God and with man. What can be more desirable, than that they should all be brought to contribute their full share to the whole stock of moral power in the church, and to give up whatever tends to enfeeble their energies for the conversion of the world ?

Christian brethren, here is the great concern with you, with me, with us all. Christ did not take us out of the world at our conversion, because our various connexions and affinities with its guilty and suffering inhabitants, peculiarly fitted us to be his agents for reclaiming and relieving them. As brothers, friends, neighbors, fellow-citizens and fellow-travellers to eternity, and even as sharing with them in the same lot of wo, we have peculiar advantages for restoring

them to purity and peace. Will we not, therefore, urge them to the utmost possible extent? Will we not enter their abodes with words of persuasive love upon our lips, unfolding to their view the transcendent glories of Christ, and pleading with them in his stead to be reconciled to God? Will we not make the art of Christian influence and persuasion, a subject of earnest study, that we may turn its full force in favor of truth and salvation?

How interesting, how solemn the thought, that God should take our feeble influence into connexion with his own word and Spirit, to make out a new and unique power, to act upon this world for its recovery to holiness and bliss? What wonders were wrought, during a period of four thousand years, to supply the revealed element in this mighty efficiency! What agony and blood did it cost the adorable Son of God, to procure the gift of the Spirit! And when that Spirit wrought in our conversion, did he not kindle in us the evangelizing fire? Did not the worth of souls, the glory of Christ, the judgment seat in prospect, with the ensuing bliss of an endless heaven, or misery of an endless hell, extort from us the earnest prayer, Lord, what can I do to pull sinners out of the flames of impending wrath? Yea, did not every principle begotten in us by the Holy Spirit, act with

impulsive force, stirring us up to do something in the great enterprise of Christian benevolence ?

And shall we wantonly put out the lights of divine truth, through our neglect or our heresies ? Shall we grieve, quench and resist the Holy Ghost ? Shall we hide the heavenly light under a bushel ? Shall we, on whom hangs the last hope of a suffering race, throw away our energies on inferior objects, and thus withhold the bread of life from millions who are ready to perish ?

Both the Christianity of the Bible, and that which has been wrought into our hearts, so far as we have any, invariably tends towards the salvation of perishing men. The love of Christ constraineth us because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead. Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men. The great question is, What will give to our efforts of Christian persuasion the greatest efficiency ? We occupy a most responsible situation. We are like men on the firm coast, opposite to which a broken wreck, covered with living multitudes, lies dashing in the foaming surf. It is no time to theorize but to act. Each is bound by all the ties of humanity, to do his utmost to rescue the ship-wrecked multitude from a watery grave. And if he recognize among them his own kindred and friends, or if he have himself just escap-

ed from their perilous condition, what additional strength would the appeal to his sympathies acquire !

This is our condition. Millions on millions of souls are exposed to the eternal damnation of hell ! Each succeeding wave of time bears off some beyond the reach of our prayers, tears and labors. Not a moment is to be wasted. Every thing tender in Christian sympathy, and fervent in holy love, calls upon us in tones of thunder, What thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.

CHAPTER III.

ANALOGY BETWEEN THE SAVING EFFICIENCY AND THE FORCES OF NATURE.

WE have seen that the power which is directly active in saving men from their sins, unites three several elements, no one of which is ever exerted independently of the others. The Spirit no more saves without the word and the church, than the church can save without the word and the Spirit. Perhaps he cannot do it, consistently with the laws of mind and accountable agency. But of this it is unnecessary that we should speak.

It is alike unnecessary, also, to vex ourselves with the question, whether the Spirit acts solely through the medium of motive in the view of the mind, or whether he exerts an influence adscititious to motive. As long as the word and the church, as well as the Spirit, sustain such a given relation to a conversion, whenever it takes place, it is not worth while to trouble ourselves about the nature of that relation in the case of each, since to all practical purposes, it is the same

whether it be one way or the other. Let me give an illustration, to show the utter folly and irrelevancy of spending so much time, to settle the claims of the motive or the anti-motive system; one of the devil's contrivances for diverting the energies of Christians from the destruction of his own kingdom of darkness to a war among themselves.

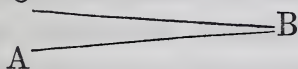
Suppose A is a point from which an influence emanates to affect the moral decisions of B; and suppose C is another point from which a similar influence reaches B; and yet that the latter is never exerted but in connexion with the former; I ask whether A's influence would not be just as necessary, as if it depended upon that alone? Here we have it; C



Now, we will suppose that A stands for the word, as contained in the Bible and presented by Christians, or that it represents motives in the view of the understanding; and C is an influence from the Holy Spirit which is wholly distinct from such motives, although it assimilates with them, runs into them, and is never exerted without them. In that case would the accompanying influence of the Spirit supersede the necessity of the word, or be itself superseded? Would not the fact of His never going where Christians had not pre-

ceded him in their applications of the word to the mind, make them just as necessary, as if they embodied the whole energy by which conversions are brought to pass?

No matter though the power of the Spirit be entirely independent of the means; no matter though the efficiency rest wholly with him and the truth have no possible control over the decisions of the sinner, owing to his hatred of it, or any other cause: yet, if it be a fact that the Spirit never exerts this efficiency, but in connexion with the reflected light of the word upon the sinner's understanding, and he cannot believe in a Saviour of whom he has not heard; then the practical conclusions in regard to the necessity of the word, are just the same as if it embodied in itself all the power for his conversion. Thus C



Now, we will suppose that the line C———B denotes the influence of the Spirit, being as independent of means, and everything apart from itself, as the energy that gave being to the first created object in the universe. And at the same time, be it understood, that the line A———B denotes the means employed to influence sinners in the ordinary way of suasion; and that though the work of the Spirit is wholly independent,

not even running in the same line with it, nor coming in contact till they are united in the mind of the sinner after the change of his heart is effected, yet, that it is never exerted, except when those means sustain a given relation to it. Then, in that case again, the practical results are precisely the same. The importance of placing the means in that given relation, without which the Spirit never produces the destined results, would be just as great, as if they contained the inherent power of doing the whole work.

Whatever hypothesis may be adopted of the nature of the union between the church, the word and the Spirit,—yet, let the fact be once admitted that conversions to holiness are never effected by any one of them by itself, and the conclusion is irresistible, that in their union they form a distinct power, that takes rank with the forces of nature and the other great powers, which God has established to accomplish the specific ends of his vast empire. No power can be known to us in its simple essence, as it comes from God, but only as it is seen operating through the channel of intermediate agencies. Who can trace the lightning to its source in nature, or follow its steps in leaping from cloud to cloud, till it crosses the field of our vision? Or who can say that the utmost link of the centrifugal and

centripetal forces, producing the intricate, convolved, and yet harmonious dance of the spheres, is not connected with the throne of the Eternal!

Is there any thing, after all, to indicate a nearer connexion with God, of the power that converts and saves sinners, than of any other member of the great family of powers? Is it not a peculiarity in the language of Scripture, to regard God as the source of them all; overturning the mountains in his anger; shaking the pillars of the earth; stopping the sun in his course, and sealing up the stars; spreading out the heavens, and treading on the waves of the sea; binding the sweet influences of Pleiades, loosing the bands of Orion, bringing forth Mazzaroth in his season, and guiding Arcturus with his sons?*

Explicit as the Bible is on this point, yet it is esteemed heterodoxical to confine our ideas of power to the instrument, in nothing but that which is exerted in the conversion of sinners. We may resign ourselves to the narrow and absurd illusion, that gravitation, for instance, is a property of matter, having nothing to do with mind, just as children resign themselves to the illusion, that the puppets dancing before them are self-moved and have no connexion with the hand behind the scene. We may speak of the care with which we replenish our granaries, as the

* Job 9 : & 38.

fruit of our industry ; of seeing as the effect of light upon the eyeball, and of a thousand other things as the product of secondary causes.

But it would peril our reputation for orthodoxy, to adopt the same mode of speaking, in reference to the production of spiritual changes. How would it sound to say, "I have filled my church with converts of my own making ; regeneration is the effect of truth acting upon the mind ; or revivals of religion are the work of the men engaged in them." And yet examination will show, that spiritual influence stands on the same level and operates substantially by the same laws, with those forces of nature, on which vegetation, seeing, and all other effects depend.

God is the common fountain and source of all the powers, and all alike operate according to an established order of sequences. And there is nothing peculiar in the power that saves, except in this, that it is not like the other powers coeval with the constitution of things, but the result of subsequent arrangement and provision. But that arrangement and provision once made, in the purposes of God ; in the patriarchal and Mosaic revelations ; in the ministry of prophets and wise men ; in the work, teaching and suffering of God's Son ; in the gift of the Holy Spirit, and in the constituted church—then the power of which they are the organ to the human mind,

takes rank with all the other powers, and acts according to the same laws of antecedent and consequent, of cause and effect.

The task of classifying even so many of the powers of the universe, as fall within the field of our observation, small as the number must be in comparison of the whole, would seem to be a hopeless one; although it has been attempted by a writer that has gained some eminence on another subject. He reduces the number of classes to seven, answering to "the seven spirits which are before God."* These he calls the physical, the organic, the psychological, the intellectual, the moral, the miraculous and the spiritual. In the exertion of all these powers, there is the same mystery of causation. And we can as easily explain the efficiency of preaching, praying and like instrumentalities, to renew, sanctify and save the soul, as we can explain the efficiency of the sunbeams, the soil and the showers of summer, to convert such myriads of tons of crude matter, into vegetable and animal substances and the various forms of

* Thos. W. Jenkyns "On the Union of the Holy Spirit and the Church in the conversion of the world;" pp. 32—54; a work of which, I believe, there is no reprint in this country. Mr. J. does not make all the parts of his subject clear to my mind, and I quote him simply as agreeing with my own previous convictions, that the power by which souls are saved, observes substantially the same laws with the forces of nature.

beauty and usefulness which characterize organized nature. The nearest approach we are able to make towards the solution of this mystery, is, to regard all instrumentalities as drawing some element of efficiency directly from God himself, who, as inhabiting his own dwelling place of eternity and immensity, keeps its vast material and furniture from falling into disuse and going to decay.

He covers himself, however, with a light which no man can approach unto, because no one can detect that element of efficiency which God supplies in all causation. In the power that converts and saves us, there seems to be a nearer approach to it, than in any thing else; because it has to do directly with our consciousness. The sinner who is convicted by the word and Spirit, and the saint who is filled with all the fulness of God, is each conscious of a power working within him, which is independent of all instrumentalities.

But they would doubtless be sensible of the same, in all the forces of nature, if they could, in an equal degree, subject those forces to the test of their own consciousness. The Bible certainly represents God as alike present in them all, except that by comparing the effects of spiritual influence to a new creation, a resurrection from the dead, and the original production

of light when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy, it takes pains to set forth the greatness of the change in a light so conspicuous, that all might recognize the hand of God in it. The application of such figures to the working of spiritual influence in the soul, may have reference, also, to its being, not more directly an emanation from God, than the other powers, but to the fact of its being the last to take its place in the family, or to the extraordinary facts, truths and instrumentalities which are its appointed organs to the human mind.

CHAPTER IV.

CAUSES THAT TEND TO DIVERT ATTENTION FROM THE INCREASE OF MORAL POWER IN THE CHURCH.

As the influence of man with man, the word of truth and the Holy Spirit united, embody the saving efficiency, it follows that the real point at issue, is, not as to the coincidence of human and divine agency, nor how it accomplishes its ends, whether it be wholly through the medium of motive or partly otherwise ; but simply *what are the most efficient modes of its exercise ?* Are the conditions of union between our influence, the divine word and the Holy Spirit, such as to afford the same encouragement to increased efficiency, in saving men from endless death, that we anticipate in medical practice, in husbandry and in other departments ?

On this point no doubt seems to be entertained, so far as individual cases are concerned. For we know that this power is not alike possessed by all, nor does the same person possess it at all times in the same degree. Institutions of theological education are founded, with the hope

of increasing it in the ministry. And what is more common, than for Christians to pray that God would give them greater power of turning conviction in favor of truth and holiness, that the weak may be as David, and the house of David as the angel of the Lord?

But the question is, may not this power be increased in the *principles* of its exercise, as well as in the aptitudes of individual actors? It is one thing to make old principles subservient to somewhat better results, and quite another to exchange them for those which are better. One ship may have enjoyed advantages over another, from its construction and the skill of its crew, before the magnetic needle was discovered; but that discovery imparted to the whole science of navigation, new facilities for accomplishing its useful purposes.

So, may we not anticipate the time, when, through the introduction of better principles into the art of Christian persuasion, or through the infusion of a better spirit into the church at large, or through the explosion of existing errors in the practices of mankind, or through the discovery of facilities in doing good, at present unknown, the enterprise of Christian philanthropy will receive a fresh impulse, and will go forward with increased power and momentum? May we not look for energies and results in pious labor, incal-

culably greater than any at present known ; that the progress of conversions to holiness will be inconceivably more rapid, and that truth charged with lightning from heaven, will rive its way through the solid fabrics of error and wickedness, prostrating them in its course, and establishing the empire of righteousness over the human character and condition ?

Powerful as are the influences leading to this result, with which we begin the race of holiness, a thousand obstructions intervene to deter us from it, and to give *retrogression* rather than *advancement*, as the general rule in the actual experience of the great mass of converts. Hence, what is a subject of more common remark, than that none are so skilled in touching the sympathies of the impenitent, as a young Christian, in the ardor of his first love ? All his feelings are nicely adjusted to the impressions of the spiritual world ; his soul is melted by considerations which are inaccessible to the more carnal and grovelling. God is with him, in him, around him, and he speaks that unsophisticated language of the new heart, which has the greatest power both with God and with man. Not only so, his earnest and continual prayer is, Lord, what will thou have me to do ? how shall I bring most honor to thy name and most good to a suffering world ? a prayer that was never

offered in vain. How then should not a life thus begun, increase, rather than diminish in its powers of pious persuasion?

1. The influence of a class of persons in the church, who are haunted by *the fear of being wise above what is written*, does somewhat to account for this melancholy retrogression. They are afraid to admit the possibility of discovering new principles of religious efficiency, lest it should involve a virtual concession, that the plan revealed in the Bible is incomplete. This timid feeling evidently keeps some from attempting any thing, beyond a snail-like movement, that would require millions of ages to secure for benevolence and mercy the circumnavigation of the globe.

But this fear, you perceive, assumes that *our* understanding of the Bible, with its plan and means of doing good, is so perfectly identical with the thing itself, as to admit of no improvement. And hence, it is the same as if a man were to repel the idea of improvements in science and the arts, on the principle that our present knowledge covers the whole ground, and that whatever is contrary to our views, contradicts nature itself and is a virtual attempt to teach it wisdom. Thus, these disciples of timidity in *assumption*, but of arrogance in *fact*, stand aloof themselves from all attempts after greater efficiency in the modes of doing good, while at the

same time, they throw all manner of obstacles in the way of others, by decrying their endeavors as being wise above what is written.

What!—have these brethren secured upon their own hearts and characters, such a perfect transfer of revealed light and love, as to be incapable of more? Have they gone so far as to bring the effort for more under suspicion of being heretical, or an attempt to be wise above what is written? These assumptions, which, alas, have but too much influence with many to fetter their advancement, carry their own condemnation with them.

2. Another means of diversion from the real point at issue, is found in *the fear of invading God's prerogative*. To suppose that God has so far entrusted the conditions of religious efficiency to our hands, as to admit of our adding thereto or diminishing therefrom, it is imagined by some would in effect suspend the whole scheme upon our instrumentality. Yea, it would depend upon our skill and management, whether Christ should see the travail of his soul and be satisfied, or not. Thus, they tell us, that with one fell swoop, we should annihilate all the doctrines of grace and divine sovereignty, and should make the production of religion in the soul, revivals in communities, and all the Christian virtues, the mere work of contrivance, like that of electricity

by turning a crank, or galvanism by the due adjustment of metallic plates. With such views, therefore, who can blame these timid disciples for shunning all attempts at discovering new principles of religious efficiency?

But why should we introduce the doctrines of absolute fate into the conditions of our agency in doing good to the souls of men, more than to their bodies? We might say with equal propriety, that as God has decreed who shall be sick and who shall be well, whose diseases shall prove mortal and whose shall be cured, therefore it is in vain to attempt to improve the science or practice of medicine. In all cases where human agency is admitted at all, *there* will be found scope for enterprise, for a choice of expedients, and for all the conditions of improvement, both in the principles and aptitudes for prosecuting the destined results. As all admit the participation of human agency in the work of conversion, therefore, why should they be diverted from efforts to increase their efficiency, by morbid fears of invading the divine prerogatives? The object of such efforts, is not to *improve* God's plan, but to *further* it; not to interfere with what belongs to *him*, but only with what belongs to *ourselves*. It is simply to increase our own capabilities for the work which he has assigned us, by conforming

ourselves more fully to the laws which he has established in the kingdom of grace.

3. *A blind devotion to established precedents*, also, does much to paralyze the arm of the church, by confining her present and future operations within the exact limit of the past. The great mass of mankind are too stupid or too indolent to aspire to the serene elevation of unmixed and unclouded truth. All truth is with them confined within the limit of what they or their fathers have thought and done, or what has been sanctioned by the party to whose dictation they have passively resigned themselves. As the Dutch emigrants to our shores were long in dispensing with the stone from their bag of meal, by dividing it so that the part on one side of their beast of burden should be an exact counterpoise to that on the other, so we are long in being freed from the illusion of supposing that the modes of operating on the mass of mind to bring it to virtue and religion, to which we have been accustomed, must be the only modes that promise efficiency, or at least the only ones that conform to apostolic models.

Whatever can boast of the ephemeral antiquity of one or two hundred years, assumes, to the view of most, the consequential airs of a custom sanctioned by Paul, Isaiah, Moses, Abraham, and its whole succession of pious men from the

foundation of the world. Every thing new to the present age, is deemed an innovation upon all that is right and ancient, because, forsooth, it is an innovation upon established forms, though those forms but yesterday were the embryos of invention. But, are there no possible attainments in holiness, in divine knowledge, and in Christian efficiency, beyond what may be found in those sects whose date is later than the reformation, or even those who claim a dubious, but corrupted descent from apostolic times. Alas for the omnipotence of precedent ! Who does not see that it is based in ignorance the most consummate, and prejudice the most invincible ? Now, while an influence like this is so pervading in the church, inflating her different divisions with sectarian pride and conceit, and diverting her from the real question at issue, viz. *how we may do most to win souls to Christ and build up holiness in the world*,—it cannot fail to fetter her march in the career of dignity and improvement.

4. Christians are deterred from the efforts necessary to increase their power of doing good, by *notions of capriciousness in the operations of the Spirit*. They seem to suppose, what I have before hinted, that the doctrine of sequences is not applicable to the kingdom of grace ; that the power of the Spirit in the conversion of sinners

and the sanctification of believers, is not merely direct, but direct in a sense to set at defiance all fixed laws and arrangements ; that the conditions of efficiency may exist *without* success or *with* it, according to the sovereign pleasure of God ; and instances are not wanting, in which individuals go so far as to suppose that the regenerating crisis, in a sinner's experience, takes place wholly apart from intermediate agencies. *There* all means lose their influence, and God, by an effort of power like the first creative energy in the universe, implants the germ of holiness and salvation. And it has been common to imagine, that texts of Scripture which persons never read or thought of, have been brought to their minds in a way to convert or convict them ; to regard revivals of religion as originating in the sovereign pleasure of God, without any special instrumentality, and, singular as it may seem, it is not unusual to estimate the value of these gracious visitations, and the genuineness of their fruits, by the *amount* of means in producing and carrying them on. The fewer these means, the more genuine the work ; and the greater their amount, or the more extended the effort on the part of Christians, the more dubious the results. This is a sort of spiritual *homœopathy*, ascribing to the least possible amount of human instrumentality the greater virtue, as the advocates of this

system of medical practice deem the millionth part of a grain of common salt, more efficacious in curing diseases, than a full potion. On this principle, we ought to expect in a nation with one Bible and one minister of the gospel, more genuine piety, than in a nation with thousands of Bibles and ministers. The truth is, it is not the *amount* of means, either in an old fashioned or a new fashioned revival, that renders it genuine or spurious, but their *nature*. We can never have too much of the right kind, nor too little of the wrong.

But the practical effect of thus repudiating the doctrine of sequences, in matters of religion, is that of ascribing our failures in promoting the work of the Lord, not to ourselves, but to a sovereign withholding of that element in the moral power of the church, which the Spirit alone can supply. "We have done our part, but God for wise reasons has neglected to do his." And the testimony of Paul is adduced, in support of these views, that God hath mercy on whom he will have mercy and whom he will he hardeneth.

This theory of the subject, however, has more the character of an emollient to the unquiet consciences of the indolent and the worldly conformed, and for all the diseases of neglect and unfaithfulness among Christians, than of an induction of facts and philosophy. It is exceedingly conve-

nient to resolve the results of our own recreant departures from duty into the sovereign pleasure of God. But its commendable qualities in this respect, cannot exceed its damnable tendencies, as a paralysis upon the energies of the church. It is an opiate, inducing an insensibility, whose injury to the spiritual health of the body overbalances all the advantages of present relief.

If the saving power is capricious in its operations, and there is no such thing as an order of conditions that absolutely ensure its presence, it is unlike all other energies with which we have become acquainted in the government of God. So certain are we, in other departments of enterprise, of the absolute fixedness of nature's laws, that we never think of ascribing our failures to any thing but an ignorance of those laws, or to the operation of causes against which we had not duly provided. And, if it were otherwise, there is no conceiving the mischief that would ensue to our unfortunate race. Suppose the attraction of gravitation were capricious, sometimes operating with one degree of strength, sometimes with another, and sometimes not at all; how suddenly and how fatally would it arrest all the occupations of life and plunge the world in mourning and wo! It would unsettle the science of hydraulics by diminishing or increasing the force of descending water; it would destroy our scale of

weights ; it would scatter to the winds of heaven the firm foundation of our dwellings ; and no reliance could be placed on any physical object or interest. The same also may be said of the laws of light, of sound, of electricity, of magnetism, of steam, of vegetation, and of all the other forces of nature. Capriciousness would convert them into instruments of untold disaster and misery to the sentient universe.

Nor can its effects in the spiritual kingdom be less destructive to the more important interests of the soul's salvation. It would unsettle all the connexions of moral cause and effect, discourage endeavors towards improvement, make the rewards of virtue and punishments of vice inconstant and uncertain, and annihilate all the securities of pardon and salvation from the plan of redeeming mercy.

So far, therefore, as this doctrine of capriciousness prevails among Christians, and it becomes with them a practical sentiment that there is no certainty of the connexions between means and ends in the kingdom of Christ,—that they may attend to all the conditions of success in promoting the work of the Lord without being successful, owing to God's taking this method to abase the pride of their hearts, or to any other cause, so far we may be sure, blight and inefficiency will characterize all their measures. But as soon

as they begin to feel and act on the principle, that the Spirit proceeds uniformly, and never withholds his presence from a due adjustment of means, then their failures will lead them to search out the Achans which obstruct their career of victory, and to remove, rather than resign themselves to, the obstacles which stand in their way.

Thus, the fear of being wise above what is written and of invading God's prerogatives, together with a blind devotion to established precedents and prevailing notions of capriciousness in the operation of the power that saves, united doubtless to other influences of a kindred character, divert the energies of multitudes of Christians from the real point at issue, of increasing their ability to multiply converts to Christ and building up holiness in the earth.

CHAPTER V.

INDICATIONS OF AN INCREASE OF MORAL POWER IN THE CHURCH.

HAVING seen that conversion to holiness is the specific object of the gospel plan of reform—that moral power, as combining the ordinary influence of one man with another, the word of truth and the Spirit's agency, is the sole efficiency for its accomplishment;—and having contemplated, also, the increase of this power in the church, as the great end which all its members should have in view, together with some things tending to divert them from it—let us now attend to the *prospective fact* of such increase, or the evidences that it will take place, before the great enterprise of christian philanthropy, is fully accomplished. Thus far, we trust, our thoughts are of a character, to enlist in their favor the convictions of every judicious mind. That they are not new or original, but accord to our every day's observations, will give the greater security of this fact.

We aspire not at presenting new things, so much as to separate, analyze and weigh those

which are old and familiar ; that we may ascertain the practical value of each, and in this way be saved from a useless expenditure of effort. As doing good, in the gospel sense, consists primarily in bringing men into conformity with the will of God, as revealed in the Bible, how manifest is the duty of doing our utmost for this object, instead of laboring at points which are foreign to it ! Brethren, shall we expend our efforts upon the abstruse question, whether motives in the view of the understanding are the sole means of conversion, or whether some influence adscititious to motive is demanded in effecting it ; whether the sinner is in a condition of activity or passivity, while the work is going on in his soul, or others of a like character ? Alas, how many will die and go to hell, before it will be possible to settle these questions to the satisfaction of all ! How much reason have we to mourn over the waste of talent, which we witness, on every hand, in consequence of turning aside to questions and things, which are really unimportant to the great point ! Brethren espousing both sides of these questions, and even those who know nothing of them whatever, have still great power in prosecuting the evangelical enterprise. So far as matters of this kind throw obstructions in the way of that enterprise, and we have a fair hope of obviating them by turning

aside to reason them, so far we are at liberty to do it; but no further. God help us to feel in all things, as we felt the day of our conversion to Christ, that we *must* not, that we *cannot* live for any thing, but to increase the purity, the power and the prevalence of true religion among our dying fellow men! As the desire of doing our utmost, to promote the glory of God in the work of salvation, is the strongest enkindled in us by the Holy Spirit, why should it be extinguished through the pursuit of inferior ends? Let us, therefore, attend to a few considerations, establishing the fact of a future increase of Christian efficiency, that we may be invited to exertion towards this great result, by the incentives of a consistent hope.

1. To begin, then, how much do we find in *the analogy of increased physical and intellectual power*, to encourage expectation of the same, in that of turning the convictions of men in favor of truth and holiness. It matters not *how* it is to be effected; this we shall consider in another part of our work; the prospective fact is all with which we have at present any concern. And when we consider the march of the human mind in every thing else, how can we doubt that *here* its experience will be the same? We can hardly anticipate an end of the cultivations, to which man may yet extend the faculties of his

own nature, or the circumstances of his being. In what art or occupation is our mode of procedure so perfect, as to preclude amendment? What science has received its last possible contribution? Our expectation and zeal of discovery and invention, were never greater than at this moment. The men of no calling, are content to pursue the beaten track of their predecessors, but are plying every faculty and effort at advancement.

Now the mysteries of magnetism are unfolded to perfect navigation and commerce—now the art of printing dawns upon the world to aid the cause of science and letters and to impart to all the interests of human life a fresh impetus—now philosophy despoils the cloud of its dreaded thunder bolt causing it to fall innoxious at our feet—now the expansive power of heat acting upon water is converted into an agent of locomotion, enabling us to withstand the violence of tide current and storm, in passing trackless seas and threading the serpentine course of mighty rivers, and, by its increased facilities of intercommunication, melting distant nations into one—and now again, improvements in all the departments of effort and enterprise, too numerous for recapitulation, and too important in their results to be duly estimated, start into being as at the touch of the magician's wand, to produce aston-

ishment and break up all the old channels of industry and wealth. Those most interested to perpetuate the former mode of doing things, may raise their remonstrances against innovation; turnpike companies may preach a crusade against railroads, as the certain ruin of the nation; packet-ship masters may cry out against the innovations of steam; and all the sticklers for antiquity, may do their utmost to obstruct the car of improvement; but it has acquired a momentum too powerful for resistance, and must speed its way onward to the distant goal.

How, therefore, should these signs of improvement show themselves in every thing, but the act of doing good to the souls of men? Does religion preclude enterprise? Does it throw over our faculties a leaden incubus, to repress their lofty aspirings, and to discourage the hope of greater efficiency, in accomplishing the appropriate ends of Christian philanthropy? For shame to our guilty imputations on the character of Heaven's own economy! Shall we limit the Holy One of Israel? Shall we pretend that he has denied an increase of power in that cause, where power is most needed—the cause of man's salvation? Let the dupes of party plead for the perfectibility of their sectarian, or anti-sectarian schemes—let them cry out against innovation—

let them watch with jealous concern, all who do not follow with them, and, like birds of night, shrink from the opening dawn—let them proceed in their puny attempts to monopolize omnipotence and force the Almighty to work in their own way, and not otherwise; He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision. Eternal Providence works in grace as in nature, spurning every enclosure and diffusing his blessings, like the dew drops of the night, over the whole area of human interests. What though the vassals of antiquated systems cry out against change! What though they lay their impious hands upon the ark of God's truth, lest it jostle in its march through the world! What though they assume to dictate that the heavenly energy shall operate in their own way, and not otherwise! The spirit of pious improvement is abroad, and the cause of man's redemption will move forward, even though they be crushed beneath its mighty tread. God has put his hand to the work, and it must move on with majesty. The human mind is aroused in the greatness of strength, and, by the achievements which it has already made, gives promise that Christian persuasion will partake of the general advantage in this respect. No reason can be assigned why

it should not be subjected to the laws which govern in other departments of human energy and enterprise.

2. *The continual effort of Christians to advance themselves in holiness and to persuade sinners to be reconciled to God*, indicates, also, the increase of facilities for the attainment of their object. Is not our power of moral suasion, as susceptible of improvement from exercise, as any of our other powers? Will not the stock in this bank, which previous generations have accumulated and transmitted to us, enable us to enlarge the business of doing good? Wherein do our capabilities fail to improve from exercise? The science of astronomy, beginning in the detached observations which oriental shepherds made upon the heavenly bodies, some four thousand years ago, as they watched their flocks at night, and gradually receiving the contributions of successive generations, has at length risen to its present perfection and sublimity. Thus, continual energy and exertion in a particular direction, are the certain road to improvement in every thing within the limit of our faculties. The strength and aptitudes of our individual organs and attributes grow by exercise; while at the same time, the materials for our work are continually accumulating. And hence, through the united influence

of both, how should we fail, in the end, of acquiring new principles of efficiency?

Nor is it to be supposed, that the evangelical enterprise will form an exception to this general rule. As in the erection of a monumental pile, each abutment and column and arch, form a more elevated base for the next above it, so, the experience of one generation of pious men in doing good, will constitute a basis on which their successors, other things being equal, will rise still higher and higher, till the cloud-capt summit of the heavenly structure, shall command the notice of angels in their flight and fill the world with admiration and praise. Some future generation of Christians may arise, who will accomplish more for truth and righteousness in the earth, than all their uninspired predecessors put together. A nation shall be born in a day. Gentiles shall come to thy light and kings to the brightness of thy rising. For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood I will bring brass, and for stones iron; I will make thine officers peace and their exactors righteousness.

3. Another indication of an increase of moral power in the church, is furnished by *the effects which have followed from the discoveries already made in the modes of doing good*. While no appearances of gold show themselves in the soil of

a country, it will not be an object of search by the inhabitants. But let piece after piece of the precious metal come to light, and whole neighborhoods will abandon their occupations, in the hope of finding more.

Just so, what we have already gained to the art of well doing, by the improvement of our ethics, by adopting more efficacious plans of operation, by exploding the existing abuses of intemperance and slavery, and by other extant novelties in impressing upon the mass of mind the things of God and eternity, can hardly fail to excite the expectation of further developments. Who can compute the amount of moral influence which has accrued from the Sunday School Institution? Unborn generations will rise up to bless the memory of those, who introduced this mode of operating upon unfolding intellect, to bring it to knowledge, to virtue and to God. By pre-occupying the vacant soil of forming character; by establishing Christian consciences in millions of bosoms that had otherwise resigned themselves to unchecked selfishness and unresisted sin; by calling into exercise an untold amount of zeal and energy for the instruction of the young, and thus turning the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their parents, in mutual efforts to bless and be blessed, to give and to receive;—in all these and

a thousand other ways, this institution has incalculably increased the moral influence of the church. And, as might be expected, it has greatly multiplied the number of conversions in childhood and youth.

Besides, who can estimate the beneficial results of field-preaching, in the time of Whitefield and the Wesleys? Providence seems to have ordered the expulsion of these holy men and their coadjutors, from the places of worship, out of a merciful regard to the poor colliers and vast multitudes like them, of whom it might be truly said, no man cared for their souls. Congregated by thousands on the open commons, over which the mighty voice of the preacher resounded in accents of love, they caught the inspirations of faith, repentance and immortal hope. And a throng which no man can number, harping with their harps, will praise God for the adventurous charity, which, spurning the limit of consecrated buildings and overleaping the restraint of established usage, pursued them to their chosen resorts of riot, Sabbath-breaking and wickedness. If so trifling a change, therefore, as preaching in the fields as well as the churches, produced results so favorable, who can foresee what may be accomplished by some future change in the mode of doing good?

Nor have improvements in the *practical ethics*

of the church, been attended by results less auspicious to her efforts of pious persuasion. That it is wrong to persecute men for their religious opinions, to use alcohol as a beverage, or embark in the slave-trade, are principles in morals which have but lately dawned upon the human mind; and their control over the convictions even of pious men, is yet far from being universal. Persecuting, wine-bibbing and soul-trafficking practices have for centuries rested on the whole family of the redeemed, like a malignant enchantment, to corrupt its reasonings, to paralyze the arm of its strength, to render its arguments against infidelity pointless and vain, and incalculably to diminish its success in persuading sinners to be reconciled to God. A system of wrongdoing in the church, however unwilling she may be in tolerating it, cannot fail to mar her beauty, eclipse the lustre of her heavenly light and rob her of a portion of that efficiency, which she might exert for the conquests of Immanuel. When all those malignant influences which ages have accumulated, therefore, come to be exploded, and the Christian family return to the pure ethics of the Bible, as contained in the law of love, and illustrated in the life of Jesus, there is no conceiving the augmentation of power, which will thence accrue over the moral decisions of mankind.

And who can pretend that this work of annihilating existing evils will not go on? Is there nothing wrong among us, whose removal, like that of a clog from the wings of a bird, would accelerate the flight of our principles? Are all our cherished practices accordant with the physical, intellectual and moral interests of mankind? Are our views of truth and duty formed on the perfect model of divine revelation, so as to admit of no further corrections? Does not the gospel which we profess to love, contain in itself the germs of a moral and religious elevation, more exalted than the one occupied by Christians at large? In view of all our past discoveries, therefore, both of old obstructions and of new facilities to our success as Christians, and of all the effects which have attended them, how can we suppress the expectation, that this work will go on still further, till we have acquired untold accumulations of power for the conversion of the world?

4. The *primitive triumphs* of Christianity, also, suggest the hope of increase in its future efficiency. What *has* been done *may* be done. As christianity began in miracle, such may be the termination of its earthly career. Indeed, the conflagration of the world, the resurrection of the dead, the final judgment, the coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven with power and

great glory, and other magnificent events with which this earthly drama is finally to wind up, cannot result from the operation of established causes. They will constitute an appropriate close of a dispensation that began in miracle.

But, in my view, the moral power of primitive Christianity was, to a great extent, independent of its supernatural endowments. It was not miracle, but speaking the truth in love and in demonstration of the Spirit, that gave its first ministers such subduing power, over the convictions of mankind. In the first age of the church, there was a class of Christians, though probably not numerous compared with all that even then had named the name of Christ, whose devotion was a more absolute and a more vigorous principle than we meet with now, in a like number compared with all who at present profess the faith of the gospel. Indeed, it is questionable whether the present age can furnish a single example, that comes up to all the divine lineaments, (apart even from their supernatural gifts,) of that heaven-impelled phalanx, which led the first charges of Christianity upon the powers of darkness. They took hold of the truth with a strength of faith, that made it assume in their view, the aspect of an engrossing reality. Theirs was the martyr-spirit, too determined, too invincible, too Godlike

and sublime, to be diverted from its purpose, by contumely, by confiscation, by imprisonment, by tortures, or by death in its most revolting forms. They rejoiced in being accounted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Jesus.

Fired with such a spirit themselves, therefore, and transmitting the same with little abatement to their immediate successors, no wonder that paganism, false philosophy, and all the corruptions of belief and practice which antiquity had consecrated, should have given way before them. No wonder that the soil, wet with their martyred blood, should have sent forth a richer growth of all that can adorn character or improve the human condition. No wonder that in such hands, Christianity should have become the dominant influence of the Roman world. Theirs was the logic of holy action, patient suffering, inextinguishable benevolence, determined effort and invincible courage, all combining to produce such impressions of their deep sincerity and earnestness, as carried a power of conviction, before which the most skeptical and obdurate quailed. In their presence, even authority trembled, and royalty was almost persuaded to lay aside its glittering insignia, for the sackcloth and ashes of penitential sorrow.

Now, does not the fact that such power was once wielded by Christians, inspire the hope of

its revival in future? What energy to chain the devil and flash abroad the light of saving conviction, may await the advancing career of those who are the destined heirs of salvation, no uninspired vision can foresee. As they give up their conformity to the world and approximate the growing lustre of the millennial sun, and as their resources come to be more entirely consecrated on the altar of the world's conversion, they *may* return to more than primitive efficiency, in controlling the convictions of mankind.

5. *Prophetic representations* of the future triumphs of Christianity on this footstool, encourage the hope of which we are speaking. When we consider the abundant evidence which the prophets furnish, of the future existence of such facts, as that the whole earth shall be brought under Christian influence; that all its kingdoms shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; that the nations shall have their hostile passions so subdued as to learn war no more, and that this mighty work is to be effected, not by physical force, but by sanctified moral suasion; how can we suppress the expectation, that Christians will hereafter find means of urging forward their godlike enterprise, at a rate of movement at present unknown? Do our existing plans, or the present extent of our moral force, give promise of results thus wide-spread

and glorious? I see not how any one, with the prophecies in his hand, can suppress the conviction of a vast augmentation in the future skill, enterprise and efficiency of the earthly forces of the Lord of hosts. But the facts from this source, indicating a future increase of moral power in the church, are too copious to admit of recapitulation, and too obvious to require it.

6. A further indication of this prospective fact, may be found in *the extent to which the conversion and sanctification of sinners is suspended upon our instrumentality*. The apostolic doctrine, that whosoever calleth on the name of the Lord shall be saved; and the inquiries to which it gives rise, of how shall they call on him in whom they have not believed, and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a preacher, and how shall they preach except they be sent,—all concur, in imposing on us, an agency which is indispensable to the evangelical enterprise. But how could this be possible, without opening to a choice of expedients, to a field for enterprise and to all the conditions of improvement?

Moreover, when we descend to the several items of the work assigned us, we see at every step, ample space for discovery in the principles of efficiency, as well as for increasing the

aptitudes of individual actors. How complex are the labors included in that single word "preach !" It consists in availing ourselves of all the avenues and vehicles of thought, and especially that of oral address, in order to bring home to the human mind and conscience, the great facts of Divine revelation, as they centre in and are unfolded by Jesus and the resurrection. In the single effort of furnishing ourselves with the *matter* of preaching, there is room for all the industry and talent which we or an angel from heaven could command. It is possible, by a due comparison of spiritual things with spiritual, to rise still higher and higher in our views of the gospel scheme, to acquire ideas and impressions of saving truth still more and more available and expansive, and to go on adding indefinitely to our stock of weapons from the spiritual armory, till scarce an enemy would be able to withstand our well directed attacks. As in nature, every disease is said to have a sovereign specific, provided it were applied in proper time and manner, so in Divine revelation, may be found a remedy for all cases of conscience and for all varieties and degrees of guilt, except the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. And it is a noble field for pious study and enterprise, to acquaint ourselves both with this remedial

provision itself, and with the most effective modes of its application to those who are perishing in sin. O how fervently should Christians pray over their Bibles, that thus they may be qualified to act most efficiently as the cure of souls !

And as to expertness in proclaiming the truth, which industry and prayer had brought to light, there is an equal field for industry and enterprise. No matter to what extent our knowledge enabled us to draw on the armory of heaven, we could not be very effective, without skill in wielding the Divine panoply. Much may be done in adapting ourselves to character and circumstances. The training of our affections, also, so that they shall respond to all the impressions of truth, like the cords of a harp to the hand that touches them, will afford scope for indefinite improvement. It is a high and holy attainment, to be able to speak the word in demonstration of the Spirit, to reprove with meekness considering ourselves lest we also be tempted, to warn with tenderness and tears, to feel continual sorrow for the obstinate and incorrigible, and to be able to appeal to the Searcher of hearts, that it is our most ardent desire and prayer that sinners may be saved. Thus, to have in ourselves all the affections which are suited

to our characters, as the ambassadors of God, and successors of patriarchs and prophets, of apostles and martyrs, is a condition of success in our great enterprise, to which the more closely we adhere, the more we shall have the power of doing in the cause of Christian philanthropy.

Then the questions as to *who* shall be sent, *how* sent, *where* sent, and as to all the accompanying circumstances of the enterprise, open to channels of indefinite research. And hence, our instrumentality in the work of salvation, is exerted in a manner to admit of improvement from study, experience, and from all the things which are relied on for improvement in other departments. How, therefore, can we doubt the discovery of new principles *here* more than in other enterprises in which our agency is concerned? We have already seen, that to regard ourselves as under the control of a blind fatality and irreversible decrees, in all that we do for the advancement of religion in the world, contradicts the analogies of general experience, and annihilates motive to the labor of Christian benevolence.

Such are some of the considerations, which favor the hope of a future increase in the moral power of the church. By keeping them in view, and being impelled by them to the earnest exercise of our faculties in study, labor and prayer

for the attainment of the object, the influence upon the cause of Zion and the interests of man, will be highly auspicious and glorious. O that God may speed our progress to the desired consummation, that a nation may be born in a day, that Gentiles may come to the light of Zion, and kings to the brightness of her rising.

CHAPTER VI.

SETTLEMENT OF THE GENERAL PRINCIPLE AS TO
THE MODE OF ACQUIRING GREATER EFFICIENCY
IN DOING GOOD; AND ALSO AS TO THE RESULTS
TO BE EXPECTED FROM ITS EXERCISE.

WE have seen that the end of Christian philanthropy, is to make men happy by making them good. They cannot be good, however, except from choice; and consequently no means can be employed in the work, but those which are moral or persuasive. Moral power is the power of persuasion, being the influence which one man has over another, in directing his voluntary actions. This, however, in itself considered, could not restore the deranged affections of fallen human nature. He is a sinner in a condition of punishment, being allowed a temporary suspension of his final doom, to afford an opportunity of availing himself of God's provisions of mercy. Still, his whole nature has felt the shock of his sin, and the retributive elements which God has rendered inseparable from the accountable faculties, have wrought in him disastrously, disorganizing

his passions, clouding his reason, corrupting his conscience, and adding to his individual cases of guilt, the inveteracy of a fixed habit in it. Easy as it may be to save a suicide, by snatching the poisoned chalice from his lips, before he has tasted it, hard indeed must it be, after it has gone into the stomach and diffused itself through his blood.

Hence, had the pious men existed to engage in the work of Christian persuasion, they could not, by the mere force of the influence of man over man, have restored a single fallen sinner to holiness and peace. God's penal provisions had gone too deep into the soul, to admit of this. No; four thousand years of miraculous dealing with the human family, and recorded by infallible pens, to make out a complete system of revealed faith and worship, the peroration of which was added in tones of power and lines of blood, by the Son of God himself, became necessary to furnish materials for the great argument of philanthropy, in beseeching sinners to be reconciled to God. And even this mighty machinery, with its wheel within a wheel, could not move forward in the hands of the church, to an efficient prosecution of the great enterprise, till the Spirit of God had been poured out, to animate the whole and lift it up above all earthly conceptions of moral power.

But when the union finally took place between the finished revelation, the influence of man with man in the church, and the agency of the Holy Spirit, then a new power was created, to take its place in the great family of powers, and to stand conspicuous above them all, as an exhibition of divine mercy,—that unto principalities and powers might be known, by the church, the manifold wisdom of God. Though miraculous in its origin, it now follows a definite order of sequences; is always present with a due adjustment of its conditions, and when it fails, some one or more of those conditions are wanting. To know what those conditions are, therefore, and how to combine them, should be the great point at issue in the minds of all God's children.

It remains now to consider the probable means through which the weak in Zion are to become as David and the house of David as the angel of the Lord. We say *probable*; for who can anticipate with precision, the course of future events? How rare is the power of being in advance of one's own age! Millions float with the tide of events, where there is one to breast its violence or change its direction. Even in the march of physical science and the arts, which are far less subtle than morals, there is no conjecturing what may come to light. It is only to those who fol-

low discoveries that they seem easy ; to those who went before, they were veiled in impenetrable darkness.

“ The invention all admire, and each, how he
To be the inventor missed ; so easy it seems
Once found, which yet unfound most would have thought
Impossible.”

Whether the Fuktions of a future age, will not employ the elastic property of air, or the galvanic and magnetic fluids, or electric currents, or some unknown agent, for the propulsion of machinery, are points yet hid from our view in the darkness of the future. Perhaps electricity may be converted into an agent of locomotion, and, winged with lightning, we may outstrip the eagle in his flight over space.

If such uncertainty, therefore, broods over man's progress in the control of material nature, how much more impenetrable must be that of his future power of acting on the human will. These considerations should check our presumptuous efforts to palm off upon all coming time, our modes of Christian persuasion, should teach us lenience to those who follow not with us, and should lead us humbly to wait on God for greater efficiency, in bringing this world under the dominion of truth and holiness.

Of one principle, however, we may be certain, that the increase of moral power in the church must be secured, by *increased acquaintance with*

those laws, according to which the efficient spiritual energy operates. For, it accords with universal experience, that a knowledge of the laws of a power, is the true and only way of taking advantage of it to subserve the ends of our being. This is the case with electricity, with magnetism, with steam, and with every agent in nature. Our acquaintance with their laws, has given existence to the needle and all its uses in navigation, to electric machines and lightning rods, and to too many other instruments of human use to admit of recapitulation.

And by parity of reasoning, will not increased acquaintance, with the laws according to which God operates in the conversion and sanctification of sinners, or in producing the benign effects connected with the establishment and extension of his kingdom in the world, give us increased power and facility for the prosecution of our spiritual labors? And, are not those holy men of every generation, who have the deepest insight into spiritual things, and whose affections are the most perfectly attuned to the heavenly influence, the ones to do the most good? The Lord honors those who honor him by entering into his views in acting upon men; while those that despise him, by preferring their own plans and views to his, shall be lightly esteemed. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him. He that is

spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

It is proper that we should here correct a prevailing error, as to the *result* which we are to expect from a high order of moral power in the church. This error arises, from not duly distinguishing between causes operating upon the will, and causes operating on a material basis. The electric machine, if it produces any thing, produces electricity. Not so, however, in the efficiency of moral instrumentalities: it may manifest itself by increasing guilt, as well as by increasing holiness. And while the labor of Jesus of Nazareth wrought holily and beneficently in the Galilean fishermen, its effects upon the obstinate scribe and priest were redoubled guilt and vengeance. But the guilt and vengeance, in the one case, as clearly indicated the potency of the power that had been working in the nation, as did the holiness and beneficence in the other.

That the power is a moral one, acting not upon a material basis, nor upon an animal or intellectual sensorium, but upon the free-born will, must in all cases render it liable to a like diversity in its manifestations. There is no extent of moral power, that can *necessitate* a definite action in the human will,—for whatever should necessitate the acts of the will, destroys their moral character. And we hazard the remark, though this is not

the place to prove it, that what we here say, will be found true even of the strongest motive, for whose omnipotence over the determinations of the will, Edwards so ably pleads. For, if the motive to a wrong were to acquire such a relative superiority over all the other motives, as to necessitate the agent's choice of that wrong, it would cease to be wrong, since it was chosen under circumstances that rendered it impossible to choose the opposite right. Nor can the distinction between natural and moral necessity, relieve the difficulty; because a motive that should necessitate a definite effect in the will, involves the *natural* impossibility that any other effect should arise, just as a cause producing a definite effect in the sensorium, involves the impossibility of a contrary effect.

Hence, it is a mistake to suppose, that the moral power of the church, or any power that is *moral*, should afford the certainty of a definite line of conduct in those who feel its influence. Were the peculiar influence which God has entrusted to his church, exerted up to its utmost possible limit, it would no more ensure holiness to all mankind, than the still greater moral power of heaven secured the angels that kept not their "first estate," from the possibility of falling. The effect of a great increase of it in the church, would be, on the one hand to accelerate the doom

of the incorrigible, and on the other, to complete both the number and the polish of Christ's jewels.

But this is the very state of things that God designs to bring on, and in which he would be most glorified. It is the state of things which the judgment seat will establish and make permanent, by separating the righteous from the wicked, giving the one to unmixed good, and the other to unmixed evil. This was the effect of our Saviour's labors, throwing out influences upon the incorrigible Jews, that hastened their removal out of the way of God's people, by a signal stroke of Divine vengeance, while they increased both the number and holiness of the pious. God every where calls upon his people to come out of the world and be separate, that they partake not either of their sins or their plagues. And such would be the effect of an increase of moral power in the church. While it would tend to a rapid multiplication in the number of the pious, it would place the obstinately wicked at a still greater and greater remove from them, rendering the line of demarkation between them, not as now uncertain, but obvious to all beholders.

By taking a different view of this subject, however, and esteeming the ability to make every body Christians, as necessary to the perfection of moral power in the church, we involve ourselves

in endless difficulty and mistake. We use arts in making converts that render them seven fold more the children of hell than they were before. We are hasty in their admission to the churches, as if that would ensure their faithfulness to a cause which we have failed to make them love. And thus, in various ways, we contrive fictitious realizations of a fictitious idea, as to what constitutes great power of doing good to the souls of men. And all this comes from the current philosophy, that the action of a cause producing effects upon the will, is like the action of a cause producing effects upon a material basis ; or from the notion that there is little or no power over the will, where there is not the power of necessitating it to a definite line of conduct. If a druggist finds his weights too light for the substance in the opposite scale, he adds to their number, with a certainty that enough of them will accomplish his object. Not so, however, in producing effects upon the will. When the number calculated to turn it in favor of holiness and God, are as great as they can be made, instead of producing the desired result, they *may* greatly increase its guilt and condemnation. What is most eminently calculated to convert and save, may become to the agent a savor of death unto death. But whether thus or otherwise, the church, in effecting this accumulation of inducements to

the service of God, evinces her moral power, and so is unto God a *sweet* savour of Christ, both in them that are saved and in them that perish : to the one we are a savour of life unto life ; and to the other of death unto death.

CHAPTER VII.

TENACITY OF UNINSPIRED DOGMAS AN UNPROMISING MODE OF ENTERING INTO GOD'S PLAN.

As our power of doing good must be proportioned to our knowledge of, and conformity to, God's plan of converting and saving men, the question is, how can these be gained the most rapidly and in the highest degree. To this question, we shall devote the remainder of these pages. And by way of contrast, we will begin by noticing a few things from which Christians are apt to expect much, but which will afford them little, if they do not stand as obstacles in their way. The efficiency of machinery is improved by diminishing its friction, as well as by adding directly to its power. On this principle, scarcely less is to be expected to the evangelizing influence, by withdrawing the hearts of God's children from unproductive channels of effort, than by directing them to those which are right.

And I see not how any faithful, intelligent disciple can fail to see, that in order to enter into God's views, we must not take them second hand,

by setting up the dogmas and standards of men as our guides ; but must obtain them directly from God himself, by the untrammelled study of his holy word, by prayer, by fasting, by holy living, by cherishing and not repressing the Spirit's work in our souls, and by the discreet and persevering use of our powers, in conversing with truth in its native sources and primeval elements. The amount of darkness and imbecility, which is at this moment accruing to the church, from the rabid determination of its several divisions, to keep up and perpetuate to all coming time, uninspired dead men's philosophies of religion, as wrought into their several creeds and platforms, is immense, is unspeakable ! Oh, what a fitting subject for sackcloth and ashes, throughout the whole family of the redeemed ! God would have his children, not innovators, not heresiarchal system-makers, not lovers of telling and hearing new things and of breaking up old landmarks merely for the sake of doing it ; but simple, honest, holy, sincere, diligent, and so untrammelled by the thinking of all our uninspired predecessors, as to take up and carry out the results of faithful investigation in every thing, assured that his promise cannot fail, of giving wisdom to those who thus ask him. But when he sees one party fighting about an uninspired creed, and excising those who are suspected of not coming up to

its measure ; another party shaping all its literature to a few dogmas which have become its favorite shibboleth ; and all parties more solicitous to maintain the sectarian individualities which human weakness and folly have done much to impress upon them, how can He admit them to his own counsels, or impart his Spirit to acquaint them with all things, yea even the deep things of God ? Alas, darkness is not more opposed to light, than this tenacity of uninspired dogmas is to the true secret of acquainting ourselves with God's plan of saving souls.

We will instance the pernicious tendency of this tenacity, in the *prevailing philosophy of conversion*. The first propagators of the gospel, appear to have regarded religion, not as a state or condition, into which a man is put by decree, by purpose, or by some power acting upon him, as heat acts upon metal in fusing it ; but as purely a voluntary thing. When they went to urge a reformation of life upon a man's conscience, they took the common sense view of regarding it as reasonable and right ; and therefore, that the man had every requisite ability to attend to it, so soon as they succeeded to make clear to his mind, the nature and reason for such a reformation. Hence, they plied themselves to the work of making them clear. They did not go to tell the man that the Gospel claims were indeed rea-

sonble, but that he could not comply with them, however clear they might be to his view, till God had wrought a change in the taste or nature of his soul, by an act of power that should set at nought his voluntary agency. No; their's was too much a common sense business, for these refinements of a subtle philosophy.

And thus matters went on for about four hundred years, abating the growth of various errors on other subjects, till in the fifth century, Christians began to philosophize upon the nature of this process of reformation. One party, at the head of which was Pelagius, held it to be a reformation to which the sinner is in himself and apart from all Divine agency every way competent; while the opposite party, headed by Augustine, taught that man by nature has lost his free agency; that this must be restored to him by a direct act of Divine power changing the nature of the soul, before he can obey the gospel; that God does this for a part of mankind, thus ensuring their obedience, not as the result of their free choice, for that they had not the power of exercising, but of his own sovereign will and pleasure; that such are saved in pursuance of an eternal decree of election, and the rest of the human family are damned, because, not being elected, God does not effect upon them the requisite change, and consequently, though the

gospel is preached to them, they cannot submit to its claims. Thus, while the scheme of Pelagius obstructs the moral power of the church, by depriving it of that element which the Spirit supplies, that of Augustine does the same, by merging all power for building up holiness on earth, in the omnipotence of God.

Now, this great controversy has swept the field of theology for the last fourteen hundred years. Not a creed or a dogma has been framed, during that long period, throughout the Christian world, Protestant and Catholic, which has not verged to the one or the other of those belligerent theories, or which has not received its cast and character from the conflict between them. On both and all sides, they have their proof texts drilled to the service of speaking the sense they wish, which, in most cases, is utterly at variance from the sense of the inspired men who penned them. Through the careful study of the Bible, this fact has been gradually developing itself in the mind of the writer for the last twenty five years, till now that book has become in his view entirely a different thing, from what the theories, foisted upon him at the outset, had taught him to suppose. And his experience is doubtless the same with that of hundreds of others. How therefore, can the thirty nine articles, or those of the Westminster Assembly of divines, or any

others arising under similar circumstances, and tintured as they are by some modification of the Augustinian and Pelagian controversy, be relied on as guides to the sentiments of inspired men, or to the laws of the spiritual kingdom? Even Augustine, whose star has always been in the ascendant, giving cast to the dominant theology, after he had duly elaborated and modelled his scheme of doctrines, had to write a book recanting the common sense things which he had written on the subject, before his controversy with Pelagius commenced. How dissimilar are the movements of a mind that follows truth and nature, from the same mind under the wrenching and excoriating influence of an invented system or theory. The substitution of theory for nature, is like abandoning the sun and resigning one's self to an *ignis fatuus*, to wander through swamps and quagmires "in endless mazes lost."

The Augustinian dogmas have so far wrought themselves into the fabric of the popular thinking upon religion, both among saints and sinners, as to make it believed, that in every case of voluntary obedience to the gospel, a prior involuntary change had been wrought by the direct power of God, which partook of all the most material characteristics of a miracle. And the practical result is, that it is of no use to make the claims of the gospel clear to a sinner's mind,

till God so changes the nature of his soul, as to bring him into a condition of salvation.

Now, the point upon which we are at issue with this view of the subject, is not whether a man is saved wholly by grace, but simply as to the *attitude of the voluntary powers* at the moment of receiving grace. The prevailing theology teaches, that this grace is exerted upon a man at a moment when the whole force of his voluntary powers are in direct opposition to it, and that the work thus effected upon him, is the procuring cause of every desirable change in those powers. Whereas, the Bible and common sense teach, that the truth in the view of his understanding acquaints him with what is right, leads him to the choice of it on the ground of its rightness, and that it is while his will is struggling to carry out this decision, that the Spirit opens upon him still more fully the odiousness of his own sins, shows him the amazing love of Christ in dying for him, impresses upon him the weight of eternal things, and assures him, in accents sweet as angels use, that his sins which are many, are all forgiven. The Spirit, by his fullness of graces and gifts, heals those infirmities of his feelings, that had otherwise overpowered the strongest decisions of his will to engage in the service of God.

This is the view which the apostle gives of the

subject, in the following among other passages : In whom, that is in Christ, ye trusted *after* that ye had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation : in whom *after* ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.* Here, you see, the *hearing* of the word of truth, or the development of the claims of the gospel in the reason, is the first thing. Then follows the act of trusting or believing it, which is nothing less or more than that attitude of the will, in which a man convinced of a thing, surrenders himself to act accordingly. This act, however, is soon followed by a sense of the impossibility of meeting the claims of the gospel, on account of the strictness and purity of those claims, and of his own vileness, habits in sin and consequent derangement of affection. A struggle ensues between the choice of a known right and the desire of its opposite wrong, producing what the apostle speaks of as a conflict between flesh and Spirit. In that state of mind, the gospel is trusted as worthy of all acceptance, and the man would obey it, were it not for the law in his members warring against the law of his mind and leading him to cry out, O wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from the body of this death ?

Now, it is while the voluntary powers are in

* Eph. 1 : 13.

this attitude of submission to the gospel, that the sealing of the Spirit takes place, subduing the feelings and bringing them into harmony with God, so that the law is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Hence, it is "*after*" we trusted or believed the gospel of our salvation, that we were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.

That the Spirit should do his work before the truth of the gospel has brought the man to surrender himself to it, in an act of trust or belief, not only contradicts the Bible, but the experience of every truly converted person. The Bible accuses us of grieving, quenching and resisting the Holy Ghost, which would be an impossibility, if the Spirit did his work in spite of our active opposition. What resistance can a man offer, when his will is already disarmed of its hostility? Can he resist without willing it? Or if he did resist, of what avail would it be, since according to this supposition, the Spirit does his work in defiance of every supposable barrier which the man may interpose by his voluntary powers?

And besides, if faith is impossible to a sinner, till the Spirit has wrought a change in his involuntary affections, why should his unbelief be treated as so serious a crime? What, a man damned for not believing the gospel, when the thing was impossible to him! He might be

damned for acting against the light of nature, or the dictates of natural conscience, but not for the lack of an exercise, the power to which the Spirit had not furnished him.

Now, it is this prevailing conviction among both the preachers and hearers of the gospel, that an involuntary change of some sort, is necessary to any successful endeavor after its blessings, that does much to create the impression of uncertainty and capriciousness, in the connexions of means and ends in the kingdom of grace. If a sinner is converted, they take it for granted that this peculiar element has been supplied in the case ; but if not, then it has been withheld. Both sinners and Christians seem to think they must wait in inaction, till the Spirit does his work. Or, if it is not absolute inaction, it is tantamount to it, because it is action without a hope of success from the inherent energy of the means which they employ. Both the foolish and wise virgins sleep together, till the accident of a sudden death, or some other awakening event, arouses them from their torpor, when, taking it for granted that the Spirit has come and begun his work among the people, they set about doing theirs, and, as a consequence, reap an occasional harvest of good fruits.

But, both the piety which the church acquires under such circumstances, and the conversions

which take place among the impenitent, if they are sincere, are defective in the qualities of durability and productiveness. The Spirit, according to their idea, is at length withdrawn, when Christians relapse into inglorious ease, the converts many of them fall away, and those who have enlightened consciences among the impenitent, are waiting for another revival to assure them of success in seeking the Lord. Nor can these evils be remedied, till the public mind is imbued with a thorough conviction, that the saving and sanctifying power is always present with a due adjustment of its means; that there is no more capriciousness here than in the laws of nature; and till Christians feel an assurance that the Spirit *will* help those who make up their minds to obey the truth.

CHAPTER VIII.

AN INCREASE OF MORAL POWER IN THE CHURCH CAN BE EXPECTED, NEITHER FROM BEING GREATLY DEVOTED TO EXISTING ECCLESIASTICAL ESTABLISHMENTS, NOR FROM THE CREATION OF NEW ONES.

OUR improvements begin, for the most part, in the two coincident impressions, that our present modes of thought are defective, and that higher attainments are within our reach. Hence, whatever diminishes the strength of either of these impressions in the church, will obstruct the increase of its power of doing good.

And that our sectarian attachments do this, to an enormous extent, cannot fail to have been observed, by those who are at all acquainted with the Christian world. They beget a self-satisfaction, which, as an individual or a social feeling, is alike adverse to improvement; while at the same time, they produce over-estimates of every thing in the organization which has called them forth, and under-estimates of every thing beyond its limits. And hence, they are a palsy upon

the energies of the church, giving her a limping, ambling and unavailable movement. A humiliating sense of present defects, united to glowing conceptions of the degree of virtue, knowledge and holiness which are attainable, and an eager desire to make them our own, is an indispensable condition of advancement. The meek, will he guide in judgment : the meek will he teach his way.

When Christians in general shall have an abasing sense of their present attainments ; when they shall go through a regular process of conviction of present wrong and of conversion to what is better, like an awakened sinner ; yea, when they shall cry out for knowledge and lift up their voice for understanding ; when they shall seek it as silver and search for it as for hid treasures ; then they shall understand the fear of the Lord and the knowledge of God. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness ; for they shall be filled. If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not ; and it shall be given him.

But, alas, how difficult is it to beget in the Christian family at large, this lowliness of feeling in regard to what they now are, and this earnest expectation in reference to what they might be, which are indispensable to an increase

of moral power! Each denomination assumes that its own constitution embodies the germs of all religious truth; that the plans of operation sanctioned by its founders contain in themselves all attainable efficiency; and hence, that nothing must be tolerated, which cannot by some construction natural or forced, be compressed within its ancient limits. Its spirit, therefore, is essentially conceited, assuming, prescriptive and intolerant, being as adverse to improvement, as pride and self-conceit are to individual advancement. It is the spirit of Rome, of the Moslem, of despotism, of hell. Rancorous, lying, slanderous and infernal, when arguments fail, it wields the more convenient weapons of appeal to vulgar prejudice, of adroit insinuations or open charges of heresy, acting on the malignant policy of crushing by some means, fair or foul, all who cannot be brought within the prescribed dimensions. Thus, each division of the Christian family, is, to a great extent, wielded by those, who will neither enter the gates of knowledge themselves, nor suffer them that would.

And it is especially unfortunate, that those peculiarities of the party, which are derived from sources independent of the Bible, are more tenaciously adhered to, than those which it draws, in common with the other sects, from that sacred source. I need only refer the reader

to the various phases which piety assumes in the Quaker, the Episcopalian, the Methodist, the Baptist, and the Presbyterian, to convince him that each of these sects depends for its separate existence, on elements and influences, which are not the necessary result of any thing taught in the word of God. Indeed, the proposition must be self-evident, that if they had nothing but what is identical with inspired teaching, their separate existence would cease and they would be merged in one.

The perpetuation of no single party, now competing for the suffrages of the Christian world, considered in all the features of its distinctive existence, is necessary to the integrity and stability of that kingdom which is not of this world. Though it may embody the ordinances and essential doctrines of Christianity, yet, these are compounded with other materials, with a prevailing ignorance of the deep things of God, with an extremely low order of practical excellence, and with various plans of action which have little or no efficiency, all entering in and giving character to the organization as a whole. And, as the advocates of each are determined to uphold all its distinctive features and to maintain its separate existence, their efforts are directed mainly to the propping up of those which are derived from sources foreign to the Bible,

these being the weaker points of the structure, and of course more needing this kind of labor to protect them. Thus, a very large, if not the larger portion of talent and effort in the Christian family, is worse than thrown away upon peculiarities that mar, rather than beautify that spiritual temple which was designed to be built up only of spiritual materials. Alas for poor human nature, always more solicitous for straws than for gold, for shadows than for substance !

True philosophy and true religion, therefore, would dictate that all the divisions of the Christian world should take the place of learners, sitting at the feet of Jesus, not only to acquire the virtues and affections of the spiritual character, but also a more perfect organization, and greater power of acting upon the mass of mind to bring it to God, thus proving all things and holding fast that which is good. How much better would this be, than taking ground against a thing as certainly wrong, because it falls not within the limits of our sectarian platform ! We never can go on unto perfection, till we take it for granted that some of the things behind are to be forgotten, and some of the things before to be secured and incorporated with our characters and plans of acting. This is as true of our present organizations as such, as of the individuals of which they are composed.

It seems to be the policy of our heavenly Father, to withdraw his blessing from every church establishment, just as soon as it becomes the nucleus of worldly passions and carnal interests, or when his children begin to doat upon it, as the sole organ of Divine power to the souls of men. Even the serpent of brass which Moses made at the command of God, though at one time the means of health and life to many a dying Israelite, was broken to pieces by pious Hezekiah, when the people were guilty of paying to it undue homage. And those institutions which were delivered in the midst of thundering, lightning and tempest, though the sole organs of God's special communications to men for fifteen hundred years, came at length to be the objects of the people's devotion, for what they were in themselves, and not as a means of connexion with the spirituality and the holiness of God. Hence, their abrogation became necessary, not merely to the introduction of a purer dispensation, but to the rekindling of piety in a nation, who had extinguished it, through the idolatry of a shadowy ritual.

And, notwithstanding the care of our Saviour, to guard his kingdom against kindred evils, by leaving with it the simplest possible organization, yet, in the space of a very few centuries, after he paid the price of our ransom, all the features

of Romanism, that most formidable of apostacies, were distinctly developed, opposing and exalting itself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped. The unostentatious rite of baptism had accumulated to itself the pomp and circumstance of a worldly institution; while the consecrated cup and the broken loaf, became the objects of an idolatry more gross and abhorrent, than that of the gods whom they had supplanted. And as to the shepherd offices that Christ had assigned for the nourishment of his flock, which were to be filled by none but those who were willing to be servants of all, they were elevated to the rank of princely thrones, and invested with insignia equally gorgeous and magnificent.

How much has been lost to the moral influence of spiritual religion, by identifying its interests with this worldly organization! The piety of such men as Thomas a Kempis, Fenelon and Pascal, beneficial as are its inherent tendencies, has by this means gone to sanction the worst practices that ever disgraced human nature. It is the main pillar in that temple of abominations in which the man of sin has built his altar and his throne. And since the Reformation, the same waste of Christian talent and zeal has been experienced, by expending them upon organizations which have become carnal and worldly. The peculiarities of a holy man's

plan of working and of his philosophy of religion, may be easily seized and wielded, by those who have not a particle of his holiness. Whereas nothing but his holiness, on the Spirit of God with him, could impart to him the least religious efficiency. It was the piety of Whitefield and not his Calvinistic theory, that gave him such power over the consciences of men. It was the Spirit of God dwelling in John Wesley, that made him so efficient in winning a bride for his Master, and not his Arminian scheme. These divine qualities of character could make them both useful, notwithstanding their differences of opinion.

These facts are not sufficiently considered by those who engage in labors of religious reform. Being stirred up by the Spirit of God to do something to correct existing evils, they have set about collecting around them those who feel as they do and are willing to identify themselves with the enterprise. Becoming at length a considerable band, and persecuted, perhaps, and driven from the existing churches, they find it necessary to adopt a visible bond of union of their own, to consolidate their strength and make them more successful in their work. And the character of this bond of union, will, of course, partake more or less of the specific objects of the reform, and of the peculiarities of genius in

the leader or leaders in it. Presbyterianism as shaped by Calvin; Lutheranism as formed by Luther and his coadjutors; the Kirk as modelled by Knox and others; the English establishment in the characteristics imparted to by Cranmer and its other founders; and Methodism as wrought into shape by the genius of Wesley; all received the impress, both of the peculiarities of these distinguished men, and of the circumstances in which they were placed. A different mind from that of Calvin, might have constructed a different bond of union; and his mind, acting under other circumstances, would doubtless have arrived at different results. The same may be said of all the others.

But when the visible bond of union is once formed, whether in the shape of a creed or no creed—any thing that gives visibility to the party—then of course, it must be vindicated from the pulpit and the press, must be accommodated with meeting houses in place of those from which it has been ejected, must be provided with an order of ministers, a literature of its own, its own modes of ensuring a transmission to coming generations, and with all the paraphernalia of a distinct organization. Talents ennoble it; years render it venerable; wealth and place make it inviting to the carnal and worldly; piety endears it to the hearts of the good; and thus it continues

the receptacle of much that is evil and some that is good, long after the exciting scenes and hardy spirits among whom it arose, have retired from the stage of life. Such is the growth of those diversified organizations, which are at this moment arrogating to themselves, it is to be feared, more of the labor of pious men, than the advance of holiness and the salvation of a perishing world.

Facts in the history of reform seem to be conclusive in this, that little advantage to the moral power of the church, can accrue from increasing the number of our ecclesiastical organizations. It may, indeed, be difficult to prevent it, in the present state of human nature. The bare fact of having in those that now exist, men of great force of intellect or peculiarity of genius, may endanger this result. Ambition may stir up this class of minds to head a party; or they may be driven to it against their will, by the proscriptive policy of those who act against them. The determination of those who live to vindicate present organizations, not to suffer them to be convicted of wrong, or to force their dogmas, unmitigated and unmollified, upon all who chance to fall under their supervision, serves greatly to inflame the tendency to schism. And in most cases, they are more to blame, than those who would bring about a different order of things.

These causes, together with others, are likely to make our own age as remarkable for schism, as any of its predecessors. Nor would this be a cause of regret, provided our nurselings gave promise of growing into more just proportions, than those which have gone before, or of adding essentially to the power of Christianity over the moral decisions of mankind. But it is cause of deep regret,—God knows how much so to the writer of these pages,—that they give little promise of such a result. As to the Disciples and the Latter-day-saints, who have their seat in the valley of the Mississippi, we are sorry to say, neither of them began in any remarkable outpouring of the Spirit, such as originated Methodism; nor in any such conflict of great principles as aroused the genius of Luther; but the one is the offspring of litigation on minor points, while the other is the result of a fraud and chicanery, almost without a parallel in the history of party. And though we concede to the Oberlin friends in Northern Ohio, to the Unionists in central New York and to kindred parties, the merit of a sincere desire to improve the piety and power of the church, yet, the dogmas or principles for which they are contending, are just as susceptible of being seized by a selfish heart, and turned to the advantage of building up a worldly institution, as those in which any other party took its rise. The pros-

pect is, that some of these parties will exist, long after the piety of their founders shall have been utterly extinguished from their altars.

We must not be understood to intimate, that the creation of a new party is never admissible; for this would impeach the conduct of our Saviour and his apostles, as also that of the reformers, who have wrought so glorious a work for mankind. But it is questionable whether it can be justified in the present state of Protestant Christianity; for it is far from being so deplorable, as that of the Jewish and Gentile nations in the time of Christ, or of the Romish church in the time of Luther. The leaders of existing organizations ought to have sense and piety enough to consider, that they were framed in a darker period than our own, and by men who had hardly yet shaken off the slumbers of a thousand year's night in the deep superstitions of Romanism; that they took their peculiar form and characteristics from circumstances that have ceased to exist; that in some cases their piety has deteriorated since their formation, and that therefore, they need to pass under the hand of an enlightened Christian reform. Why then repel such a process, and drive those who attempt it into schism?

Besides, brethren whose light is in advance of their age, should do their utmost to scatter it

abroad, in a way to make it as diffusive as possible. Would it not be infinitely better to diffuse it among all God's children, than to leave it as the exclusive property of a sect? Do they not all need it? Is not a tendency to schism among the most serious obstructions to the moral power of the church? Shall we then indulge it? Let us rather seek for peace and things wherewith one may edify another.

CHAPTER IX.

ON AN ELEMENTARY AND CRITICAL VIEW OF THE WORK TO BE ACCOMPLISHED, IN ITS CONSUMMATION AND IN THE SEVERAL STAGES OF ITS PROGRESS, AS A MEANS OF INCREASING OUR POWER FOR ITS ACCOMPLISHMENT.

WITHOUT clear ideas of what we have to do, how can we acquire efficiency in doing it? We have spoken of our work in the general terms, of making men good, converting them to holiness, building up holiness in the world; as a regeneration, a sanctification and final salvation. But as Lord Bacon observes, "syllogisms consist of propositions, propositions of words, words are signs of notions; if therefore our notions are confused and do not answer to things all our reasonings are baseless." The thing itself in its specific elements, which the Bible makes essential to salvation, or the analytical properties of that change without which our adorable Saviour would fail to see the travail of his soul, must be understood, both as a security against fallacious reasoning and as a guide to our proceeding in the

several stages of its progress. We are apt, in speaking of salvation, to leap over a vast chasm of intermediate facts, and fix our thoughts exclusively on the great result of a soul in heaven, surrounded by its beatific visions, and forever exempted from sin and all its consequences. But this general conception of the subject, glowing and magnificent though it be, will do as little towards enabling us to realize it, in our own case, or that of the multitudes around us who are perishing for lack of vision, as that of perfect health among all his patients, in the imagination of the physician, will do towards conducting them through the several stages of the process to that desirable result.

Let us fix our minds upon that perfect holiness which is to constitute the final consummation of this glorious process, and then we shall be the better prepared to appreciate its several stages, as well as the treatment best calculated to promote them. *Holiness is that condition of the moral faculties, in which they are in harmony among themselves and with general truth.* An accountable agent is not one of a single faculty, but of a constitution of faculties, having various relations among themselves and to other objects and beings. One class of them, such as the personal, have respect to his own happiness; the social impel him to the converse of other beings and to

admit their happiness to consideration in connexion with his own ; the intellectual are the foundation of his knowledge ; and the spiritual, including the moral sense, lead him up to God and immortality. Like the several members, organs and fluids in the body, each of these faculties has its specific place and use, which it must keep and subserve, or a chaos of the soul will ensue and a misery be engendered, as much more keen and lasting than any thing the body is capable of enduring, as it is more noble, more powerful and more indestructible in its nature.

God, however, has so fenced around the faculties of the soul, that no being in the universe can inflict injury upon them, till the agent, by his own recreant violation of known law, has involved them in ruin. Who shall harm you, if ye be the followers of that which is good ? We ourselves must open the door, before Pandora can discharge upon us all her plagues. Hence, the chaos and confusion of the moral faculties always implies guilt, which the Bible contemplates under the idea of pollution, while their due balance and right exercise, involves holiness, which is innocence, virtue, purity.

There are innumerable ways, in which an abuse of our voluntary agency, may introduce anarchy into the soul. It may be done by indulging our self-love at the expense of our social af-

fections, and thus infringing upon the rights of others. Did not that mother who lately, in one of our cities, starved her children to death, to gratify her love of strong drink, incur the deepest guilt, and betray a state of anarchy and misrule in her affections, totally disqualifying her for peace and bliss? The one, also, who lives to gratify himself or his friends, at the expense of his known duties to God, throws his soul into horrid confusion, and must feel the blight by a necessity as inevitable, as that of death to the body by pouring out the heart's blood. This was Adam's sin, preferring the gratification of his appetite and the pleasure of his wife, to the known will of God. And the majesty and glory of law are evinced, not merely in the dire result upon himself, but in the infamy and woe ensuing to his whole race for time and eternity, and in the shock which outward nature received, when

“Earth felt the wound, and Nature from her seat
Sighing through all her works gave signs of woe
That all was lost.”

We are apt to think and speak of the moral laws of God, as something abstract from the nature of man; whereas, they are a part of himself, and the penalty of their violation is ensured by causes physical to his soul, so that God could not make it otherwise short of a miracle, any more than he could, without a miracle, prevent

blindness to a man who should pluck out both his eyes. Nor is there in the nature of the soul any redeeming provision, more than there is, in the constitution of a man thus made blind, any provision for restoring to him his sight. Consequently, apart from some extraneous and extraordinary remedial arrangement, the anarchy of the soul, when it is once produced, must remain coeval with its existence. God has not only provided, that all his accountable subjects shall have the care of keeping themselves in his love, or of subordinating every feeling and affection to his law as addressed to their reason and conscience ; but he enforces a due exercise of the great trust reposed in them, by sanctions powerful as His throne and tremendous as a miserable eternity. Thus, by suspending their destiny upon their own free-will, he has put within their power, on the one hand, virtue exalted, and bliss supreme ; and, on the other, he has exposed them to guilt unmitigated and hopeless, in

‘ a lake of burning fire,
With tempest tossed perpetually, and still
The waves of fiery darkness ’gainst the rocks
Of dark damnation break and music make
Of melancholy sort.”

Moreover, other beings and things are adapted to awaken in us given affections, and to exert over our conduct a given influence. God, whose adorable attributes entitle him to the supreme

place in our thoughts ; our fellow beings, money, pleasure, and every object within the field of our mental vision, are in themselves suited to influence us, in some way and to some extent. And holiness is that condition of our moral faculties, which prepares us to educe from these beings and objects, just the impression and influence, which are suited to their nature and value in the scale of being. But unholiness is that condition of these faculties, which educes from them the wrong impression, leading us to estimate every thing on a false scale. As God's claims are supreme, the holy love him with all their heart and all their strength, pouring forth to Him the melody of exalted and undying praise ; while the unholy prefer themselves, their friends, their pleasures, and their momentary gratification, to God ; and when aroused to a full contemplation of his adorable perfections, as they will be in eternity, his name will grate harsh thunder upon their discordant souls.

The one may be likened to a healthy palate, a cultivated taste, and an ear exquisitely tuned to vocal harmony, so that the nicest shades of difference in things addressed to each, are instantly detected. But the other is like a diseased palate, an uncultivated taste, and an obtuse and discordant ear, educing from every thing addressed to it, the wrong impression, or no impression

at all. To the palate of the healthy, every thing is natural; but to the sick nothing is so. In a man of cultivated taste, the lovely scenes spread out under the deep blue of an Italian sky, excite most exquisite emotions. But if a savage,

“ Whose soul proud science never taught to stray
Far as the solar walk or milky way,”

should view the same scene, it would either be with no emotion, or none corresponding to the object before him. And as the ear of Paginini was nicely tuned to harmony, detecting the minutest shades of difference or discordance, so the soul of the holy is nicely tuned to the harmonies of all truth, and shrinks from moral discord with instinctive horror, while the unholy esteems discord harmony, and harmony discord.

This view of a holy and unholy condition of the moral faculties, will enable us the better to appreciate the condition of sinners, as they are, and as the church aims at making them, by means of the influence of which she is the organ to their souls. This work includes both the *commencement* of a sinner's return, and his *progress* to final glorification.

Its commencement. That which is decisive of this work in a sinner, is not a series of reformations in leaving off this, that and the other sin, till all are given up; but a single act of his will in resigning himself wholly to God, as he is re-

vealed in the gospel. Abraham's faith in resigning himself wholly to God, in leaving his native country, in circumcising his household, and in offering up his son, when God required these things at his hand, was reckoned to him as righteousness. That is, God has provided, under his constitution of grace, and by the atonement of his Son,—that central fact in the history of redemption—that such as surrender themselves by their own voluntary act to do his will, shall be accounted the same as those who have always preserved the holy condition, or due balance, of their powers and affections.

Indeed, there is reason why this single act of faith, or surrender to God's will as made known in the person of his Son, should be made decisive of salvation; because it is the primary element in an absolutely holy condition of the moral powers. Holiness, in a creature, is a surrender of all to God, so that his will shall be supreme in all things, as we have before shown. What so much distinguishes the inhabitants of heaven, as this, leading them to cry out in harmonious acclaim, at every new discovery of the Divine pleasure, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Their holiness consists in this subordination to the will or law of God, as addressed to their reason and conscience. And this the sinner renders at his conversion, though

there is this marked difference in the two cases, that while *their affections* are in absolute harmony with the law of God, *his* are in a state of anarchy and rebellion and tend continually to break up this surrender of himself to God and to seduce him again to sin. Hence, as saith the apostle, without extraordinary help from the fulness of the Holy Spirit, "he cannot do the things he would." The law is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Here comes in the wonderful provision of moral power in the gospel, imparting to the sinner an ability, which would otherwise be impossible to him, not only of making the surrender of himself to God's will, but of maintaining that surrender, notwithstanding the relics of his former derangement in sin.

But these polluting relics cannot annihilate the efficacy of faith to justify him. Many as the features of Abraham's character may have been, unlike those of a perfectly holy being in heaven, still they could not bring him into condemnation, so long as he maintained his surrender to God's will. This act by itself, though not as yet connected with the complete balance of his moral powers, secured his justification. It was by this act, also, that the three thousand on the day of pentecost were justified. This act in Saul of Tarsus, as evinced by his submissive

prayer, Lord what wilt thou have me to do ? procured the instant remission of a train of bloody deeds, that had been pursued up to that hour. The Philippian Jailor, the next moment after having self-murder in his heart, so surrendered himself to God, as to rejoice in the pardon of all his sins.

Now, we see the wisdom and goodness of God, in thus centering every thing in a single act. It secures his church in dealing with sinners, and sinners in attending to the teaching of the church, against the danger of confusion and mistakes. It enables the church to say specifically, Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, as Moses said to the dying Israelites, Look to the brazen serpent and live. She is not encumbered with the fearful task of saying, up to what extent the sinner must carry his reformations, in order to obtain pardon ; nor is the awakened soul exposed to the horrid apprehension, lest he has not rendered the prescribed measure. No ; he is forced to throw away all his reformations, as alike vile and useless, as a basis for pardon and salvation, and say in the sweet couplet of Watts,

“ Here Lord I give myself away,
’Tis all that I can do.”

Indeed, no other act is suited to the sinner’s

circumstances. His sin consisted in seeking his own gratification at the expense of his duty, or in making self, instead of God's glory, the ultimate object of pursuit. When God, therefore, reveals himself to him in the gospel, as a God of infinite love, making the pardon of his sin possible through the death of his Son, the sinner is brought to the alternative of saying at once, whether he will accept of the provision and return to his duty, or whether he will go on in his sins. He is not called on to say, whether he will have his faculties instantly placed in the state they would have been in if he had never sinned, for that is impossible. The guilty infusion is in his blood; it has deranged all his feelings; it must remain still as his thorn in the flesh, the messenger of satan to buffet him; but he is encouraged under it all, by the sweet voice of Jesus, saying, My grace shall be sufficient for thee. All that God has provided to do in conversion, is to take again the throne of the sinner's heart, so that it shall no longer be he that lives, but Christ that shall live in him. By thus choosing Christ as his prophet to teach him; Christ as his priest to atone for him; and Christ as his king to exercise absolute dominion over him, he returns to that primary element of a holy condition, in which God's place in the soul

is supreme. When so much as this is gained, it gives assurance of that progressive sanctification, which will finally eradicate all the infusions of sin, and present the soul faultless before the divine throne with exceeding joy.

CHAPTER X.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.—NECESSITY OF
CONCENTRATING OUR APPLICATIONS OF TRUTH
TO THE SINGLE POINT OF PRODUCING FAITH
AND ITS CONCOMITANT GRACES.

SINCE a voluntary surrender of himself, on the part of the sinner, to God's will as it is revealed in the gospel, is *the* thing short of which the moral power of the church would fail of its object, how dangerous is it to suffer ourselves to be diverted from it! How simple, how plain is the object before us! How ought ministers to frame all their sermons to the ungodly, with reference to gaining it! What an awful spectacle is that, of a minister standing in the pulpit to expatiate on topics in general, throwing in a beautiful passage here, and another there, with little reference to the object in which he *must* succeed, or an endless hell will be the portion of his hearers!

If a special ambassador to a foreign court, charged with business involving the peace and security of all nations, should spend his time in

rambling over the fields of general science and literature ; should devote himself to painting and poetry ; or live there to display his fine person and equipage ; and, in the midst of it all, should forget the errand on which he had been sent, and should return without doing it ; he would not present to his country and the world so shocking a specimen of recreancy to duty, as that minister who allows any thing in God's universe, to divert him from his work of producing faith among his impenitent hearers. Or, if he even magnifies a subsidiary point into the place of the principal one, and gives greater prominence to something else, than the surrender of the soul to God in a new and everlasting covenant, he may expect upon himself the curse of an unfaithful watchman, who saw the enemy coming, but gave not the alarm.

How shocking is the thought, that some should be so gross, as to make an *external rite*, imposed on helpless infancy or adult age, *the* thing which is decisive of salvation ! Millions are now resting their hopes of heaven on their baptismal regeneration, hopes which are to be dashed in everlasting disappointment. O ye, who encourage them in these delusive hopes, how will ye dare to meet their wailings at the judgment seat ?

Others go a little further, and connect with

baptism a *speculative faith* in the gospel, and outward conformity to its moral code. Others lay great stress upon being able to convince sinners that they *ought* to repent and believe. Sermon after sermon is preached with this object in view, when the great majority of the hearers, are perfectly aware of their duty. They know they ought to forsake their evil ways. Even devils believe and tremble. There is not a drunkard in the land who is not, in his sober moments, convinced that his habits are ruinous, and that he ought to break them off. But he will not, till something shall be presented to his mind, that shall make it seem feasible for him to resist his appetite and regain his character. And happy indeed is it for the cause of humanity, that we have learned to supply this desideratum in that reform. Now, this is the very thing that the church must present to the mind of a sinner, before she can secure upon him a still greater, more benign and more lasting reformation.

It is not enough that we induce sinners to *resolve* that they will believe. Can resolves to do a thing suffice, when the gospel requires the thing itself? "Hell is paved with good resolutions." We cannot resolve or will our sins away from us. It is a law of God's moral government, as we have already seen, designed no doubt to pro-

tect its great interests, that when a sin is committed, it should throw all the elements of the soul into malignant play. The understanding is darkened, the conscience corrupted, the desires inflamed, and the moral leprosy strikes its roots into the deep foundations of the soul. And the sinner could as easily have willed himself into being originally, as he can will himself into a state of holiness. There is no basis in him for such a will, no fulcrum for the Archimedean lever, because every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually.

Hence, the cure is neither in a visible rite, nor in a speculative faith, nor in a conviction of what we ought to be, nor in an effort of the will to dislodge sin from the soul; but in such a surrender of the mind to that image of goodness and truth, which is held up in the preaching of Christ and him crucified, as transforms us into its likeness, from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord. As in the healing of our bodily diseases, the virtue is in the medicine, and not in the act of taking it; so in the cure of our souls, the virtue is in the truth believed and in the Holy Spirit accompanying that truth, and not in the act of believing it. This act, however, is indispensable in the case, and Christ as the good physician, can cure only those who will submit to his prescriptions.

The first thing, therefore, which the church has to do, in bringing sinners to the decisive point, is that of developing the truth to their reason. Hence, the command to *teach* all nations, to *preach* the gospel to every creature, and to *speak* among the people all the words of this life. And who can conceive of provision more complete than that with which we are furnished, for this part of our work? Whence in all God's universe, can such an array of facts be found, or such channels of convincing reasoning, as those which are spread out between Genesis and Revelation? It is God's great argument with mankind, the result of four thousand years' composing, which,

“ when set before
The mind with perfect evidence,”

and in demonstration of the Holy Spirit, “ *compels* belief,” Who can pretend that we have made the most of these materials!

Next, *reflection* on the truth delivered, must be ensured. If it just come into the mind and float out again, it can impart no more nourishment to the spiritual nature, than food to the body, when the stomach ejects it as soon as it is received. The moment the doctrines of the cross come within the sphere of the sinner's thinking, he is thrown into a condition of action in regard to them, ejecting or cherishing them. Hence, all to

whom our Lord was personally known, as the cities where he preached and the individuals with whom he conversed, were made the more virtuous, or the more vicious by his presence. If they received and cherished his truth with avidity, then it wrought in them its divine results ; but if they refused it, they incurred a double vengeance. And it was more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah, than for such cities and individuals.

The work of ensuring reflection upon the truth, therefore, opens to a vast field for enterprise and contrivance in the church. In the mode of presenting and illustrating it, in the circumstances under which it is presented, and in various ways, much may be done by prayerful and zealous assiduity, to chain attention to it, and thus to secure for it the dominion of the mind. The reason why truth is, in some cases, kept so long before the mind, without being incorporated into its constitution, is, that little or nothing is done to arouse attention to it. Let a revival of religion, a sudden death, a new cast of genius in the preacher, or a new train of circumstances of some sort, conspire to ensure reflection, and hundreds will be converted, whom the ordinary routine of events failed to reach. A traveller might pass over hundreds of miles, without taking a permanent impression of scarce an object with which he should meet. But let him be

waylaid by robbers ; let a bridge fall under him and precipitate him into the current below, to the imminent hazard of his life, or let any other incident occur, and he will be able to give a more minute account of the mile in which it happened, than of all the rest of his journey.

How far Christians may hereafter find means of arresting attention to the truth, on the part of those to whom it is presented, it is difficult to foresee. That all such means, wisely contrived and judiciously managed, would conduce to an increase of power in the church over the conviction and conduct of mankind, it is easier to see and acknowledge, than to point out the particular mode of procedure. God graciously provides for this in his providence, by the various casts of genius which he introduces into the ministry. We fail to realize from this source all we might, however, on account of the tendencies to schism, which our ignorance and narrow views beget, whenever such minds arise among us. While our policy is niggardly and selfish, God is enlarged and noble in his, dividing to every man gifts severally as he will. In this way, he provides to diversify the modes of application, and to command for his truth the attention necessary to its saving results.

Another thing necessary in contributing to the production of faith, is that of securing for the

gospel the *approval* of sinners. Nor is this a difficult task, because every thing in it is suited to elicit from them this feeling. Does not the action of that daughter, who subsisted her father in prison at her own breast, excite the admiration and approval, even of those who are themselves most deficient in filial duty? So, the worst of men will find every thing in Christ to admire, if they can only be brought duly to reflect upon it. Though degraded themselves, they "*feel* how awful goodness is." Hence, in securing so much as this, the church has ample materials.

And when we have succeeded to lodge with sinners the inward consciousness that our cause is right and theirs is wrong, it will beget dissatisfaction with what they are themselves, and may lead them to surrender all to Christ. If they come not to this result, it will be because they resist their own convictions, taking ground against what they know and feel to be right, and thus bringing upon themselves one of the alternatives of moral power, that of greater guilt and condemnation. The Spirit has reproved them of sin, righteousness and judgment; but they have resisted like the stubborn Jews, and judged themselves unworthy of eternal life.

It is only by being conducted through this process, however, of having the gospel developed to the reason, of having the mind given up to seri-

ous reflection upon its claims, and of having the approval elicited towards it, as something important, that the sinner can come to the decisive point of *surrendering* himself wholly to it, to be moulded after its model of excellence, and to be governed by it in all things. In contributing, therefore, to the foregoing stages of this process, Christians must never rest in them as an end, but keep undeviatingly in view, its decisive stage of actual resting upon Christ for salvation.

We call this final stage, a resting upon Christ, or a surrender of the mind to him, a state of the moral faculties which may be illustrated by common things. A man hears the cry of fire in a city, and at first thinks little of it. The idea of an existing fire, is barely developed in his mind. He next discovers that it is in the direction of his own house, and begins to reflect more intensely upon the matter. And finally, he learns positively that it *is* his own house, and that his children are in it; and then he throws all the energies of his being upon the fact, and exerts every nerve in a manner suited to the crisis of his circumstances.

This is faith. We first hear the truth of the gospel; then we attend to what we have heard; then we approve it as true and important; and finally we commit ourselves to be and do all that the circumstances in the case demand. We sur-

render ourselves to be governed by Christ's laws ; we receive his teaching as from God ; we put ourselves under his protection ; yea, we rest our prospects of happiness for time and eternity, upon his promise. It is to those who thus surrender themselves to him, and, by a continued effort of their voluntary powers, hold themselves to the issues of their new mode of life, that he gives liberty and authority to become the sons of God, even to them that *believe* on his name. They partake of the Divine nature, as children of the nature of their parents ; the Holy Spirit makes their bodies his earthly temple and his throne, and both the Father and Son love them and make their abode with them.

This form of expression, "He gave *power* to become the sons of God to them that *believed* on his name," is not accidental, but suited to express the fact as it is ; that such a state of voluntary surrender to the truth of the gospel, as faith involves, is prior to that state of the affections which makes the yoke of Christ easy and his burden light. In other words, the change which the convictions of truth in the mind effect in the voluntariness, is the antecedent, of which the change in the affections is the consequent. A surrender to the truth on the bare conviction of its rightness, in itself considered, cannot give one the feeling of a child in God's family ; and hence it

does not involve the "power" of becoming a son of God. That power comes from receiving the Spirit of adoption, the fruit of which is love, joy, peace and all filial affections. But God has graciously established a certainty, that this Spirit shall be given to those who make this voluntary surrender. Their faith shall "work by love," or shall be followed by love, not in virtue of its inherent efficacy, but in virtue of the Spirit of power given in consequence of its exercise. Hence, the church may go to her work of lodging truth in the mind of sinners, till she "*compels*" the voluntary surrender of themselves, confident that when so much is gained, every saving result will follow.

Now, these several stages of knowledge, reflection, approval and faith, sustain to each other the relation of antecedent and consequent, so that when the one is gained, the other will follow, unless the natural course of things is interrupted by a resistance of the Holy Spirit. The truths known are such, that the agent would offer violence to his own nature, not to think them over and dwell upon them, as much as he would not to think over the death of a wife or parent, of which he had just heard, or a pecuniary loss threatening to involve him in bankruptcy, with which he had just been made acquainted. And thinking them over, cannot but enlist his ap-

proval of them, as of great moment. Can the highest specimen of love in the universe, as evinced in dying for one's enemies, fail to command admiration? Have not the morals of the gospel extorted reluctant praise even from its worst enemies? Not to approve, therefore, would be an act of violence to one's own nature. And then, to barely approve of the gospel in the abstract, to say that it is good and excellent, without making it a personal matter, is an instance of most extraordinary absurdity and folly. It is like a dying man professing his belief in the efficacy of a medicine to cure him, and yet refusing to take it. What! a man contemplate and approve the purest specimen of life and conduct, without attempting to conform to it! Know and approve as true, the fact that an endless hell must be his portion except he repent, and yet live impenitent! Acknowledge Christ as an Almighty Saviour, and yet not trust him!

The church, therefore, has only to consider and avail herself of the advantages, which the nature of man holds out for the prosecution of her work, to assert and maintain her preeminence, over the moral elements of this lower world. There is potency in those truths with whose development to the mind of man she is entrusted, and they cannot fail to command attention, elicit approval and to ensure faith. She has only to

urge them upon the intellectual and spiritual nature of man, by all the means that God has placed within her reach, confident that the appropriate results of her moral power will develop themselves on every hand. Multitudes will be converted ; while those who are not, will both resist the Holy Spirit and do violence to their own nature, and thus will be driven to a still wider and wider extreme in wickedness ; and the line of demarkation between them and good men will become so obvious, that the prediction will be fulfilled, 'Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.'

As to promoting the graces concomitant to faith, or the perfection of the character in holiness, we must only indulge ourselves with one or two brief remarks.

Much will be gained here, by keeping in view, that holiness is not a given feeling excited on a given occasion, as those suppose who refer us to the time of their sanctification ; but, as before explained, it is the harmony of all our powers and affections, both among themselves and with outward objects and relations. A man may be filled with love and with God, on a particular occasion, and every Christian ought to expect this. But to have our expenditure of money, our bodily exercises and gratifications, our recreations and

pastimes, our intellectual pursuits, and every thing pertaining to our being, in all its diversified relations and conditions ; to have all these brought into just the right place in our thoughts and attentions, so that our characters shall neither be defective nor excessive in any thing, must be the work of time and experience, as well as of large measures of the indwelling Spirit. For the want of this mellowing and correcting influence of time and experience, the apostle would not have "a novice" in religion, even though filled with the Spirit, introduced into the office of a bishop.

There seems to be, therefore, some confusion in the thinking of those, who consider the fullness of the Spirit, the same as perfect holiness. Where a man enjoys in himself the consciousness of *intending* God's will in all things, or of never knowingly, to give way to pride, or lust, or selfishness, there can, I grant, be no corroding sense of guilt. He shall never walk in darkness. There is no condemnation to those who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Now, professors of religion must aspire to live in this manner, or give up their pretensions to piety. To resign ourselves to fleshly living, under the notion that we cannot walk after the Spirit, betrays a want of that faith, without which there can be no piety. Oh, that we were all meek, gentle, condescending, charitable, and

holy, as befitting those who have partaken of the Divine nature. Finally, brethren, be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace: and the God of love and peace shall be with you.

CHAPTER XI.

ON ACQUAINTING OURSELVES WITH THE ADJUSTMENTS OF TRUTH WITH THE INSTINCTIVE TENDENCIES OF MAN'S NATURE, AS A MEANS OF INCREASING THE MORAL POWER OF THE CHURCH.

As the gospel system was constructed by the same hand that formed the nature of man, it follows that the two are adjusted to each other. Not only so, it is natural to suppose, that this adjustment should be with man himself a matter of keener sensibility at some points than it is at others. The bed, the room, the attendants, and every thing about a sick man, may be exactly suited to his wants ; but nothing seems to him so acceptable, as the remedy adapted to cure his disease. The gravitating power, the atmospheric gases, and every thing that touches the bodies of men, may be suited to their organization ; but at no point do they feel the impression, as at the eye, the ear and through the other senses. So, the moral nature of man has its assailable points, and the gospel its truths adapted to touch those points, and to leave upon them

impressions that vibrate on all the chords of feeling and penetrate to the deepest recesses of the soul.

I take leave, therefore, to suggest, whether the moral influence of the church would not be greatly increased, by searching out these points themselves and the truths adapted to assail them, and urging the contact between the two to the utmost possible extent. It is as if you wished to influence the conduct of the sick man, in the case before supposed, by threatening to withhold from him some of his personal comforts. In that case, which would do most for your object? telling him that he must lose his bed? his room? his attendants? no, but that if he does not comply, he will deprive himself of the only remedy that can save him from death. This, made real to him, would move him to a compliance, if any thing could do it. The besieging army expends not its blows upon the whole line of the fortress; but selects its most vulnerable points, and brings its heaviest artillery to bear upon them with concentrated force. Thus, in assailing the soul of fallen man, we must find out those points which are most susceptible to impressions, and array against them the whole force of truth's divine artillery, till they give way to penitential sorrow, or to a malignity, approximating the sin against the Holy Ghost.

I fear that in all our theological reasonings upon fallen human nature, we have run our notions of man's depravity, not to an extreme, for that is impossible; but into the absurdity of making it physical, rather than moral, and of supposing that there are no chords in him that can vibrate to the touch of gospel truth, till grace has put them in tune. We entertain notions of a death in sin and a resurrection to spiritual life, which, if analyzed, would destroy the obligation of believing the gospel. And it is well known, that some have gone so far, as to deny the duty of saving faith to men by nature. Yea, these extreme doctrines of Calvinism have been so pervading, within the last fifty years, as to require the whole force of Andrew Fuller's intellect, to explode them and to bring Christians within the pale of reason and common sense. Their influence is not so far destroyed, however, as to admit of our realizing even yet, the full power of the gospel over the moral nature of man. You cannot get from the chords of his sensibility right vibrations, it is true, till they are attuned by grace; but then, you can get vibrations that will grate like harsh thunder to the lowest depths of his soul. And these horrible sensations must be awakened, and he must be slain by the law, before he can be made alive by Christ.

Considerable reflection and inquiry on the subject, give me confidence to suggest the doubt, whether the theories which have been broached in reference to the *conscience* of man, are adapted to explain the phenomena of that faculty. My mind has labored under these impressions for years. What has more to do with the history of this world, than the workings of conscience, or the religious elements of the human character? What more than the moral sense? Does the soul of man know a keener pain, than the lacerations of a guilty conscience? It is the Medusean head, shaking pestilence from her horrid hair. It seems to me, therefore, that to make conscience nothing more than the understanding or intellect acting on moral subjects, comes short of the real facts in the case. We trample on our reason and judgment continually, submitting to customs and practices which we are free to pronounce foolish in the extreme, and yet it gives us little or no pain. Why, therefore, this horror of the judgment we form of right and wrong? Acute pain is rarely if ever experienced, except where violence is offered to our *instinctive* affections. The mother feels it over her dying child, and the miser over his consuming treasure; because, instead of the reason, the maternal, or the hoarding instinct, in such cases, receives the shock. If the reason of

the mother, in estimating the amount subtracted from her happiness by her child's death ; or that of the miser in calculating the extent of curtailment which his means of personal gratification are likely to suffer from his loss, were the only principle of his nature concerned in the event, trifling indeed must be the pang in either case. Apart from the instinctive affections, such events would hardly be deemed a calamity.

And Dr. Wayland's theory of a "separate quality," an "ultimate moral sense," in which he was preceded by Bishop Butler, it seems to me, fails of duly accounting for the retributive elements of that part in the constitution of a moral agent, which is usually denoted by the conscience. "There is a superior principle of reflection or conscience in every man," says bishop Butler, "which distinguishes between the internal principles of his heart, as well as his external actions ; which passes judgment upon himself and them ; pronounces determinately some actions to be in themselves just, right, good ; others to be in themselves evil, wrong, unjust : which, without being consulted, without being advised with, magisterially exerts itself, and approves or condemns him, the doer of them, accordingly ; and which, if not forcibly stopped, naturally and always of course goes on to antici-

pate a higher and more effectual sentence, which shall hereafter record and affirm its own."*

With all deference to more competent reasoners, I submit whether this part, in the constitution of a moral agent, does not embrace, not a simple ultimate moral sense merely, but three separate qualities, all concurring to the same result, which I shall call an *instinct of the Divine existence*, an *instinct of immortality*, and an *instinct of right and wrong*. The sense which I attach to the term *instinct*, may be explained by the love of offspring, which is independent of reason, being merely the gushing forth of the feelings at that point. The little girl betrays her maternal tendencies in the care of her doll, long before her reason is informed on the subject of that delicate relation. These tendencies, instead of being generated by her reason, direct and control the development of that faculty. So, it seems to me, the religious elements of our character, instead of belonging to the reason, give form and direction to that faculty. And should it be said that an instinct, such as the maternal, for instance, depends, not upon any thing in the soul itself, but solely upon the bodily organization, I ask, how do we know? It is certain that the soul has in itself a foundation for

* Butler's Sermons, Cambridge Ed. p. 53.

various classes of faculties. Are not those of the intellect, of the sensibility, and of the will, each distinct from the others? Are not the social sentiments distinct from the personal? And will not these several classes of faculties remain with the soul in its disembodied state, showing that they are independent of the bodily organization? If so many instinctive tendencies belong to it, therefore, why may there not be others? What I shall call the *spiritual instincts*, it seems to me, just as obviously constitute a distinct class of faculties in the soul, as those of its intellect, its volitions, its personal or its social sentiments.

1. *Its instinct of the Divine existence.* Whatever may be said of the origin of our ideas of God, I see not how any can doubt the existence in our nature of a tendency, independently of the dictates of reason, to religious worship and adoration. The natural history of our race, simply as an animal species, as clearly indicates this, as that of the lion and the bear does a tendency to prey upon other animals. In the absence of suitable lights to direct this instinct, it finds scope upon the most monstrous and absurd objects leading to the worship of stocks and stones, wind, tempest and the heavenly luminaries, and even reptiles, fourfooted beasts and creeping things. In this respect it is like the

maternal instinct, which, in the absence of children, can find a pet to fondle and indulge, even among meaner creatures. And the history of France proves, that, however infidelity may change the character of our gods, it cannot blot out our tendency to worship. *That* is entrenched too deep in our nature to be unsettled by the veering dictates of a capricious intellect.

Innumerable evidences of these facts present themselves on every hand. They are furnished in the astrology of the ancients, in their various modes of prognosticating coming events, and in the witchcrafts, soothsayings, incantations and the innumerable forms of a profound and mysterious superstition, which show themselves in all parts of the globe, but most in those least enlightened by the gospel. Aside from an instinct to the deep and the awful in religion, Mahomet could have contrived no arts to whet the feelings of his countrymen to that pitch of malignant and indomitable fanaticism, which overran Asia and the best portions of Europe with its victorious legions. From the fetishes and amulets worn by the sable tenants of Africa's interior wilds, and the savage theology that hears its gods howl in the wind and bellow in the storm, up to the elaborate philosophy of Plato and Socrates, we recognize kindred streams from the same deep fountain in man's soul. And these senti-

ments every where stand associated with the working of the conscience, as an integral part of its conception of duty and moral obligation. They are the executive elements of that faculty, from which comes its preeminence over the other faculties. The bare, cold perception of right and wrong, apart from an elementary consciousness of Divine existence and power, could not invest the moral sense with its kingly prerogatives.

2. *Instinct of immortality.* The *general belief* among mankind in existence after death, is far in advance of the *natural evidence* of that doctrine. Every one will be convinced of this, who compares the confidence of its truth in such minds as Socrates, Plato, Seneca and Cicero, with the evidences which they adduced in its support. Their *confidence* was unbounded, while their *evidences* came far short of demonstration. Indeed, there is no demonstration of immortality, aside from Joseph's new tomb. Christ brought "life and immortality to light through the gospel."

And yet, no deficiency of proof, has been sufficient to explode from the human heart the fond hope of immortality. His instinctive impulses induce this belief on the slightest evidence, or with no evidence at all. Nevertheless, those impulses are neither reason nor inspiration ; but

like the eye, which, though adapted to receive impressions of light, cannot originate it; they simply fit us to catch the radiance of eternity, so soon as it pierces the veil of our inherent darkness. And they even stir up within us a restless longing for immortality, as the infant appetite longs for the aliment with which it has not yet been regaled, producing, in the absence of authentic intelligence from a higher world, those innumerable forms of superstition and idolatry, which, without affording effective alleviation, illustrate our indomitable tendencies, and render our darkness only the more visible.

If these impulsions are not instinctive, depending upon the elements and not the accidents of our character, where should philosophy have found its stimulus to its unbounded efforts towards settling the doctrine of a future existence; or superstition its magic in converting our wealth into temples, altars, and sacrifices, and our desires into prayers, deprecating the anger of invisible power? Or how should the shades which a future retribution casts before, have found means of doing so much towards wielding the destinies of mankind? To account for the working of human nature in these several points of view, (a vast field, supplying to history its principal facts,) it must be conceded, that the basis of our religious and immortal tendencies, is not superin-

duced by education, but exists among the original and indestructible elements of our constitution.

Indeed, as the preservation of our species could not be entrusted to mere reason, but required the superadded strength of the sexual and parental instincts,—so, it seems to me, that virtue and moral obligation required the enforcement of those profound feelings that lead up to immortality. The retributive provisions of God's government over this world would be null and void without them. Suppose a race were to exist with all the constituent faculties of an accountable nature, with the exception of the one of which we are speaking; but that they had nothing in their nature to assure them of the *permanency* of their susceptibility to happiness as the reward of virtue, and to pain, as the punishment of vice, of what avail to them would be the penal sanctions of law? All the promptings of their constitution would lead them to say, let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die; let us enjoy the present, since we have nothing to anticipate in the future. Hence, God has entrenched the confidence of immortality where the uncertain conclusions of the intellect cannot effect its utter annihilation. It is too material an element of law and moral obligation, to be entrusted solely to the reason.

3. *Instinct of right and wrong.* This is what Dr. Wayland calls "a distinct *impulse* to do that which we conceive to be right, and to leave undone that which we conceive to be wrong. This impulse we express by the words ought, and ought not. Thus, we say, it is right to tell the truth; and I *ought* to tell it. It is wrong to tell a lie; and I *ought not* to tell it."*

This is all well, so far as it goes. But does it account for the amazing phenomena of conscience, as the Doctor has developed them in his succeeding quotations from the poets; its agonizing struggles with passion; its tormenting suspicions when the criminal deed is done; its horrid forebodings; and its piercing stings making life more dreadful than death, as in the case of Judas? No; these facts bespeak the gushing forth of other rills from the spiritual department in the nature of man, to swell the tide of emotion arising from the sense of right and wrong, to interpose their powerful barriers against the commission of sin, and thus to assert the majesty of offended law.

The "impulse to do that which we conceive to be right, and to leave undone that which we conceive to be wrong," is sustained by associate impulses leading up to God and to immortality,

* Moral Science, first Ed. p. 39.

and thus opening upon the soul the most profound, awful and tremendous sensations of which it is capable. Little as this fact may have been noticed by reasoners on the subject, it is one of the greatest practical notoriety. A passage from a pagan may be taken as a sample of many like it in all languages: "That person who is conscious to himself of having neglected his oaths, in my opinion can never be happy; for whoever becomes the object of divine wrath, I know no swiftness can save him, no darkness hide him, no strong place defend him; since, in all places, all are subject to the power of the gods, and every where they are equally lords of all."* And even Butler indistinctly recognizes the same fact, in the last member of the sentence already quoted, where he speaks of the conscience "naturally and always of course going on to anticipate a higher and more effective sentence, which shall hereafter affirm its own." This, however, he calls, not a component element, but merely a "part of the office of conscience." Whereas, it seems to me, that this instinct of the Divine existence and this instinct of immortality, are elementary to conscience itself and essential to its effectual working on any subject. And the sense of the wrong of an oath, apprehension of

* Zenophon translated, p. 209.

the Divine wrath, and the consciousness of being unable, ever or any where, to escape the destined punishment, of which Zenophon speaks, come not merely from the working of the reason in connexion with the naked sense of right and wrong, but from those deep and mysterious instincts. Indeed, we have innumerable examples, in which the guilty person retains the sense of his wrong unimpaired, when, however, he feels no remorse. This shows that the retributive elements of conscience are distinct from the bare sense of right and wrong. The absence of remorse, in all such cases, is owing to a paralysis, from some cause, of the instincts leading up to God and to the retributions of eternity. Hence, it seems to me, that the part of our natures to which the term conscience is applied, is not a separate or simple element, but is complex, being made up of several principles united. Its phenomena arise from those faculties or affections which belong to the spiritual department of our mental constitution.

And should it be objected to this, that the conscience has no power apart from the reason acting in view of moral truth, I answer, so has the maternal instinct, so has the will, and so have self-love and the social affections no power apart from the reason. That the spiritual faculties can only be developed in connexion with the

intellectual, no more proves their identity, than it is proved that a man's hand is the same with his heart, by the fact of its deriving from that organ its life and its power. No part of the moral constitution would be complete by itself. The intellect is as dependent on the sensibility, as the sensibility is on the intellect; and both would be alike nugatory and vain, but for the will directing and controlling their exercise. If the necessity of the reason to the development of the conscience, therefore, proves their identity, all the faculties may, by the same rule, be merged in one. It is by means of truth presented to the reason, that our taste for painting, poetry, sculpture and music is brought out and cultivated. But does this prove that a man can be a good painter, poet, sculptor and musician, by simple force of intellect? Neither can simple force of intellect make him devout, even though it be directed to the study of moral and religious truth.

CHAPTER XII.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED—ON THE ADAPTATION OF THE BIBLE, BOTH IN MATTER AND MANNER, TO THE SPIRITUAL INSTINCTS OF MAN'S NATURE, AND THE POWER WHICH WOULD ACCRUE TO THE CHURCH BY FOLLOWING ITS EXAMPLE.

IF we turn from the nature of man to the word of God, we find it suited to the view given in the previous chapter. It relies more upon holding up images to kindle our spiritual instincts, in achieving its results, than upon elaborate discussions to convince the reason. By a critical view of the *matter* of the revelation, it will be seen to arrange itself under three general heads, which we may entitle the *doctrine of God, of Immortality, and of Law*.

That the development of the Divine being and attributes is a leading feature of the Bible, is too clear to require showing. Its pages open with this subject, holding God up to our view, as the creator and possessor of heaven and earth, in opposition to the local divinities which were ob-

jects of worship among the different nations. He proclaimed himself as the I AM THAT I AM to Moses ; displayed himself both to Egypt, and to Israel, as having absolute control over the elements of nature ; declared himself the living, in opposition to the dead gods of the nations ; and thus he went on unfolding his character and attributes, step by step, till all the elements of the scripture doctrine of God, from Genesis to Revelation, were duly lodged with the human mind and recorded in human language. Man had lost the true idea of God, had merged his tendencies to worship in household and national gods, in the forces of nature and in the heavenly luminaries ; and he had even changed the glory of God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds and fourfooted beasts and creeping things. Hence, a long course of training was necessary, to disengage his mind from materialism, and elevate it to the spirituality and holiness of the divine nature. It was to accommodate the earthliness of his conceptions, that a ceremonial and symbolical worship was first instituted ; it being designed to continue only so long, as should be necessary to furnish his language with terms, and his mind with ideas, for a more elevated theology, that in the end, those who worshipped the Father, might worship him in spirit, and in truth. And how much effort it

cost, to draw off the hearts, even of the chosen people, from making sensible and idolatrous things the objects of their worship, and to confine them to the Infinite, the Invisible and the Eternal, is well understood by every reader of the Bible. The whole drift of the Old Testament goes to this point, and to develop to the mind of man, the true idea of the Divine nature and attributes. And yet, the work was so far incomplete, when our Lord came to finish it, that he says, Neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

In connexion with the progressive doctrine of God, was that of a coming life. Both the rewards and penalties of the Mosaic economy were temporal, those of another life being but faintly adumbrated by the temple, in its apartments, furniture and worship, which, as the apostle shows, was a type of heavenly things ; while the anathemas pronounced on all capital violations of the theocratic constitution, were designed gradually to prepare the mind for the conception of a spiritual and endless hell. In this way a vocabulary was furnished, to express ideas of eternity, the terms of which were duly defined by the spiritual revelations of the New Testament. And the resurrection of Christ broke up all the anticipations of a temporal Messiah and a

temporal dominion under him, which even the apostles entertained to the last, and threw the mind forward to eternity, as the state in which all the moral elements of this life are soon to be merged, for weal or for wo. It was from this that arose the contempt of death, which was so remarkable a feature of primitive Christianity, as the apostle shows, when he says, "if only in this life we have hope, we are of all men most miserable."

Now, when we have added to the foregoing, the ethical system of the Bible, with its sanctions, we have the whole of the revelation. Throughout all God's dealings with the race of man, both in a state of innocence, and after their lapse into sin, his claims upon them are kept continually in view, being enforced by no less sanctions than the primeval doom of the whole race for the sin of its progenitor, and subsequently by the destruction of the old world by water, because every imagination of the thoughts in the heart of man was only evil continually. In God's dealings with his chosen people, also, from the moment that Moses and Aaron began to address them in his name, the object of asserting in their view, the majesty and glory of his law, was never lost sight of. In the plagues visited upon Egypt for contempt of the Divine mandate; in the overthrow of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea; in the thundering, lightning and

tempest of Sinai ; in the varied sins and judgments of the subsequent sojourn in the wilderness ; and in the administration of the theocracy through all the long centuries that succeeded ; God kept in view the object of developing to the mind of man, not only the nature of law and moral obligation, but the high estimation in which he holds them himself, and in which he means his creatures shall hold them, throughout his universal dominion. And to complete the whole, he sent his Son to illustrate the law in his life, and to afford us a specimen of a perfect son, a perfect brother, a perfect benefactor ; or of human character in these and all possible relations, as it would be, if it were not corrupted by sin. In his undeviating devotion to his Divine Father, doing only what would please him even to the sacrifice of his life, he illustrated the first table of the law, requiring supreme love to God ; and the second, requiring love to man, he unfolded by pouring out himself upon the altar of our happiness. He gave himself for us. Not only so, but his death was a sacrifice to the majesty of law, doing more to set forth the greatness of its penal provisions, than the doom of millions of guilty races to an endless hell. The gospel, therefore, in all its features, though an arrangement of mercy, contains a more lucid exhibition of the ethical principles of God's government,

than had been made, even under the dispensation of the law itself.

Hence, the *matter* of the revelation divides itself into three grand departments, each of which is grafted upon an instinctive tendency of the human soul. From one department, we find materials to assist our tendencies to worship ; in those of another, our longings after immortality find ample scope ; while the other furnishes helps and encouragements to the moral sense, in relieving it of guilt, and directing it to whatever is lovely and of good report, which are a lamp to our path and a light to our feet. In spite of all that infidelity can do, such a revelation must always vibrate on the deep chords of sentiment in the heart of man.

And when we turn to the *manner* of the revelation, we find more to stir the instincts than to exercise the reason. What is the usual mode of making a thing clear to the reason ? Is it not that of presenting arguments and propositions consecutively, in order to give a specific result, as in the mathematics ? But I need not say how remote the Bible is from any thing of the kind.

When God revealed himself to Moses as the I AM THAT I AM, or the Self-existent, and by the authority of that name, sent him to deliver his people from bondage, did he put Moses upon the track of any process of reasoning, by which it

might become clear to his mind, that the Being addressing him, was what he claimed to be? Did He state to him a syllogism, or any similar process of demonstration, by which he might establish the same to his people? Not at all. Moses was convinced by the burning, yet unconsumed bush, and by the mysterious voice that addressed him. When he remonstrated against undertaking the mission, on the ground of his inability to make the people believe that the Lord had appeared to him, what method did God take to remove the objection? Simply that of a miracle, in turning his shepherd's rod into a serpent. And to convince Pharaoh of his high commission, Moses had power to smite his land with plagues.

Thus miracle is the argument which God uses throughout the pages of his word. But it does not so much depend for its power over the mind, upon the simple exercise of reason, as upon the profound, mysterious and awful sentiments which it stirs up in the soul. It has no other affinity with the thing proved, than as it establishes the physical omnipotence of God. By lifting an enormous weight, a man shows his physical strength, but not his moral or intellectual power. So, the plagues of Egypt, the passage of the Red Sea, the stopping of the sun in his course, the cure of a leper by a word, a touch or an ablution,

and most of the miracles both of the Old and New Testament, were exertions of power in the production of material changes. But they are no otherwise confirmatory of God's holiness, of the obligation of his law, or of his character and claims as an infinitely perfect moral governor, than as they establish the messages in which these truths are proclaimed.

Whatever hold they may have on the reason, however, their deepest impression will be found in the sentiments of awe, reverence, fear and mystery which they awaken. The presence of an agency, arresting the course of nature and breaking up the established connexions of cause and effect, has a peculiar power to entrance the feelings and to set on foot a train of emotions, vastly more decisive of conduct and character, than any thing that comes to the mind in the form of a cold perception or intellectual conviction. The ghost of a dead man appearing to the living, or an angel entering a man's abode with messages from a higher world, are events connected with entirely a different order of impressions, from any arising in the course of nature, however extraordinary. Hence, the peculiar charm of those preternatural stories of witchcraft, of second sight, of premonitions of coming death, and a thousand things of the kind, with which every generation abounds. Hence the

power of oriental story tellers, who hold their auditors entranced the livelong night, to hear of genii, and apparitions, and enchanted castles, and giants, and ghosts, and of satanic, or angelic agency.

How powerful is the influence of things like these, upon our unthinking childhood! All the older novels, such as the Arabian Nights' Entertainment, are addressed to those mysterious instincts of the soul, as the modern ones are, for the most part, to the instinct of connubial love. Both alike feed, not the reason—for that is not convinced of their truth—but the sentiments, and both alike tend to their perversion. Our modern novels, we know, are far from being safe guides to our delicate attachments; and those of former times, while they fed the spiritual sentiments, did by no means, fit them for communion with the Father of our spirits. Still, as the one receive their charm from those affections which lead to all that is benign and beneficial in the conjugalities; so the other derive their interest from the sentiments which are conversant with God, eternity, and with all that is high and holy in religion. And it was upon these deep toned and powerful chords of our nature, that miraculous attestations vibrated so forcibly, so convincingly.

The Bible presents all it has to say, not in the

protracted and consecutive series of a *demonstration*, but in the detached sentences of a *dogmatism*. Even the doctrine of atonement, by the death of the adorable Lamb of God, has more in it to move the feelings than to feed the speculations of the reason. The doctrine of another life is presented in a form to awaken our hopes or our fears of a coming retribution, but not in a shape to be incorporated with the elements of a philosophical theory. The life of Jesus touches the same principles of our nature which awaken our interest in the highly wrought characters of a fiction. Our sentiments fire the imagination, and lead us to invest the object which has awakened them with preternatural traits of character. And the tendency of love to magnify the excellencies of its object, beyond all the possible facts of real life, is what gives us our interest in the exquisitely drawn characters of a novel, or the glowing descriptions of poetry. Hence, our Saviour's freedom from selfishness, from pride, from ambition, and from all the faults of human nature; his devotion to his Father's glory, his unparalleled love for mankind leading him to die for his enemies, and the extraordinary features of moral beauty and excellence which he displays before our view, being suited to our instinctive aspirings after preternatural specimens of virtue and power, have peculiar advantages for wield-

ing a formidable influence over the interests of mankind. His life of thirty-three years on this footstool has done more to shape the social elements than all that the genius of a Plato or an Aristotle could devise, than all that the splendid endowments of a Bacon or a Newton could unfold. The simple power of mind, or even of embattled enemies, could do little towards wielding the destinies of this world, in comparison with effectual appeals to those deep, profound and awful sentiments which are cognizant of duty and moral obligation, and that lead us up to God and eternity.

Now, these things, I fear, are not sufficiently considered by Christians; which accounts for the rage after simple mental power as a means of building up holiness. The whole routine of study, in qualifying a man for the ministry, by whomsoever invented, is strangely at variance with the work which it professes to have in view. Hence, the difficulty of a young Christian to maintain his religion in his preparation for the ministry. He is all the time delving in things that seem but remotely connected with his work, as if a painter were to spend his time in wielding a blacksmith's sledge, in order to acquire skill in wielding his pallet and his pencil. He comes out, therefore, an acute reasoner, a glowing essayist, an elegant declaimer, and with such

like qualities, which, the more he has, the less he will know of the real elements of human nature, upon which he has to operate, or of the true mode of reaching and arousing them. The whole tone of his thinking, feeling and reasoning, is calculated rather to repress the tendencies of an anxious person, than to conduct him to the crisis of pardon and salvation. Hence the much greater power of some, who are uneducated in the schools, but deeply read in the human heart and the laws of the Spirit, to move the religious sentiments and bring the soul into sublime communion with God. Though they fire light arms, yet they aim at the mark and hit it, while the heavy ordnance of the other, being discharged at random or in the opposite direction, fails of doing execution.

Now, the church, by keeping the spiritual department of man's nature in view, and adjusting her measures accordingly, will add greatly to her power of doing good. The sentiments of religion and moral obligation, like the conjugal, have their appropriate object, and when it is presented, no elaborate reasoning is necessary to convince the mind of its being the right one. This is a matter of consciousness. Can the eye mistake its appropriate element? Can the conjugal and parental instincts mistake the objects adapted to elicit them? So, hold up to the mind objects

adapted to kindle the spiritual sympathies, and they never fail of producing an impression, in some form and to some extent.

This we see, in the effect of the presence of Jesus of Nazareth to the Jewish nation. His unsurpassed meekness and love ; his godlike disinterestedness ; his soft, deep, winning, powerful accents of persuasion, falling like notes from a higher world, leading them to confess, "never man spake like this man ;" his works and miracles of beneficence, and all the points of his most extraordinary character, commended it to the *conscience* of the nation, as appropriate to the instinctive elements of that faculty, and, for a time, wrought in them so mightily, that they were like the man out of whom went the evil spirit walking through dry places seeking rest and finding none. But their pride, their ambition, their hopes from the Messiah of a temporal dominion and freedom from the Roman yoke, and of being raised to an unprecedented pitch of worldly prosperity, came in to counteract their instinctive convictions, to open the avenues of their heart to the return of the evil spirit with seven associates more wicked than himself, and thus to precipitate them upon an end more dreadful than the beginning.

And who has not seen in times of revival, and under preaching eminently calculated to impress

the spiritual sentiments, whole communities apparently conscious of the working of some extraordinary influence among them, bold and hardy infidels reeling to and fro like a drunken man, at the gushing forth of feelings from within tending to unsettle all their established convictions, and even the worst of men, though as far as ever from any purpose of amendment, showing signs of a mysterious interest in the passing events? That effects somewhat similar, also, should betray themselves in connexion with spurious religion, as we have witnessed in those tumultuous excitements which have set men to ranting and jumping and howling and throwing their bodies into all manner of contortions, is no more singular, than the extraordinary abuses to which the delicate passion of love is in some cases subject, as well as the other stronger impulses of our nature. These things rather evince the existence of such elements in our constitution as we speak of; for if our moral sense and our tendencies to religion, were referable exclusively to the reason, how should they be capable of such intense excitements, such repulsive abuses?

It is well known, that the most surprising feats of human nature are performed at the instigation of what I call its instincts. A young lady, timid, delicately educated and attached to her home, if she conceive a passion for an object

deemed unworthy of her by her friends, will precipitate herself, at the dead hour of night, from the window of the parental abode, to wander with him in the line of contending armies, over bloody battle fields, or across the ocean wave, encountering the howlings of the storm and buffeting with dangers and difficulties that make the stoutest hearts quail. And why is all this? Simply that the conjugal instinct is kindled, the object in her view being invested with those noble, generous and magnanimous qualities, that awaken in her the impression that none is like him, none so suitable to be the sharer of her fortune and her destiny.

In like manner, when the spiritual instincts are kindled, man is prepared for the most extraordinary feats. Feeling pours its mighty current from the deep fountains of the soul, and neither courage, constancy, enterprize, nor ardor are wanting for the most daring achievements. These are the qualities, and not the convictions of cold reason merely, that constitute the martyr spirit, bold, indomitable, invincible. Neither racks nor gibbets, serpent dens nor conflicts with wild beasts, the blazing faggots of the stake, nor any mode of torture within the compass of infernal ingenuity, could shake its purpose of devotion to the Object, who, as a broad sun, fills and illumines the whole hemisphere of the soul.

Why should ministers deem it necessary to read dry lectures to the reason, infusing religion into their hearers by dint of logic, as the mathematician drills his pupils in that science? Why shrink so instinctively from excitement? Excitement! Who that knows the alphabet of human nature, does not know that great enterprises are always carried on by appeals to its excitable tendencies? To what did Demosthenes so much address himself, as to arouse in his auditors the love of liberty, veneration for distinguished ancestors and a great national history, or to the sentiments of patriotism and the fires of martial ardor? Did he confine himself to dry logic, in setting forth the disasters of Philip's domination? No; he understood the excitable points of Athenian character, and there he levelled the artillery of his mighty eloquence,—an eloquence whose vibrations will never die away, while the heart has chords of noble sentiment to respond to its exquisite touches. Let the church, therefore, learn a lesson of wisdom from the man of this world; yea, let her follow in the footsteps of her inspired exemplars, by studying to adjust her efforts, both in matter and manner, to the instinctive and more assailable points of the human character.

CHAPTER XIII.

ON THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST, AS THE GREAT DESIDERATUM TO AN INCREASE OF MORAL POWER IN THE CHURCH—APPROPRIATENESS OF THE BLESSING TO THE NATURE OF MAN—ITS RELATION TO PREVIOUS DISPENSATIONS—ITS PERMANENCY.

AMONG those who profess to believe in Jesus, as the Messiah and Saviour of mankind, various views are entertained of the *nature* of his influence, and of the *manner* of propagating it. Some suppose it to have been merely the influence of an individual endowed with extraordinary virtues and truths; and that its propagation is effected simply, by holding up his life and teaching to the minds of men. Others suppose Christ to have been truly and properly God, that every thing pertaining to him was out of the ordinary course of nature, and that his influence is propagated by the direct power of God. According to this view, each particular case of conversion is effected by special divine interposition, which is indicated, as it is supposed, by our being “crea-

ted in Christ unto good works," "quickened together with him," "born of God," and by kindred passages.

Whereas, the truth appears to lie between these extremes. It is this, that as Christ united in himself all that is peculiar to humanity, except its guiltiness, as evinced by his being made of a woman; and all that is peculiar in the attributes of God, as evinced by his miracles and resurrection; so a similar union is effected, both in his influence itself and in the modes of its propagation. So far as he partook of human nature, his influence, virtue or religion was simply that of an individual endowed with unmingled and unspotted excellence, and he is an example of how an uncorrupted man would act, not in a sinless condition, not as Adam was in the garden, but in the actual state of things as they exist in this guilty and suffering world. But so far as his character was supernatural and divine, his influence both in itself and in the modes of its propagation, was entirely above the reach of the human capacities even in an uncorrupted state. That is to say, a mere man living as holy as Jesus of Nazareth and under his actual circumstances in life, would have been disqualified, not merely to satisfy the penal claims of the law for our transgression, but to set on foot such a train of causes, so powerful, so commanding, so agitating to the human

soul and to the social elements, as that which actually accrued from his advent, and which has wrought so extensively and gloriously for the last eighteen hundred years.

And up to this present hour, it seems to me, a similar union exists between humanity and divinity, in the person of the church and the indwelling Spirit. As it is said in Acts, *we* are witnesses of these things; and so is also the *Holy Ghost*, whom God hath given to them that obey him. Thus, the propagation of the influence from the person and the life of Jesus, to this day, and its future propagation to the end of time, when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ, has been, is and will be carried on by the united agencies of the church in the use of the written word, and the Holy Spirit.

In applying the word *baptism* to the present influence of the Spirit, in them that believe and obey the gospel, I shall doubtless by some be thought guilty of a perversion in terms, as they have been accustomed to suppose that the peculiar gifts of the Spirit, indicated by that word, were the sole privilege of the primitive church. But when I have explained the sense which I attach to the term, I shall doubtless carry with me in *that*, if not in the word I use to express it, the convictions of all spiritual Christians. I mean

by the baptism of the Holy Ghost, that extraordinary measure of spiritual influence which enables a Christian to surmount his lust, his pride, his vanity, his worldliness, and all the forms of his selfishness; and that so fills him with God, that love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, and every divine affection and virtue, flow forth from his soul continually, springing up into everlasting life. It is the constant flowing of these divine qualities, directly to God, and on every hand through the channel of all the social relations, that our Saviour alludes to, when he says, He that believeth on me, as the Scripture, hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers [not river] of living water: for this he spake of the Spirit which they that believe on him should receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. As a living fountain in an elevated place, sends its streams down the acclivity in every direction, describing green and beautiful belts of verdure wherever they go through the otherwise arid waste; so those Christians, who enjoy that fulness of the Holy Ghost, which I call a baptism, are continually throwing out all around them, influences to bless and beautify the moral landscape. And did I believe there were none such now on earth, or that the hope of any Christian being such, were withdrawn from the

spiritual family, not only would a large part of the Bible be to me a perfect enigma, but I could have no confidence of a successful issue to any of our means of propagating the influence of Christianity. This was the kind of baptism of the Holy Ghost, which I suppose to have been the privilege of the great mass of the believers in the apostolic age; the gift of inspiration and miracle being confined but to a comparative few.

I ought perhaps here to say, before passing, that I do not understand by the Holy Spirit, a bare emanation from God; but a distinct Divine person. Hence, as a distinct person or subsistence, the ordinance of baptism is administered in his name; and he is represented as sinned against, as resisted, as quenched and grieved; and as performing acts of his own, such as brooding on the face of the waters, taking of the things of Christ and showing them to his people, reproving the world of sin, righteousness and judgment; and as sealing believers unto life everlasting. Consequently when the Holy Spirit dwells in our hearts, our bodies become his temple and we are filled with all the fulness of God.

1. This gracious gift of the Spirit is *appropriate to the constitution and condition of human nature in the present world*. Wherever we contemplate man, whether in a savage or civilized

state, we find the marks of design on the part of Him who sketched the plan of his being, to keep up with him special communications. He has left a chasm in our means of necessary knowledge, that cannot be filled by any of the natural helps to our understanding. Man has, as we saw in our last two chapters, an instinct to worship and to immortality, as well as a moral sense. But can nature fully satisfy him, as to the character and claims of the Being whom he ought to worship? He may indeed learn from this source, the power and greatness of God; but as to his justice and his mercy, his truth and his holiness, he must remain in the dark, unless enlightened by other means of knowledge.

Equally deficient, also, are our means of being assured of existence after death. The hope of immortality, though prevalent among most of the tribes of men, is no where an available and an ennobling sentiment, except where divine revelation has shed its light. The followers of Mahomet entertained it without becoming better men; and among the pagans it is associated with neither purity in morals nor consolation in death. And besides, the dark, contradictory and confused ideas of virtue and moral obligation, which prevail every where among the unevangelized portions of mankind, conclusively show, that our natural helps to information on this sub-

ject, are not such as to meet our wants, nor to afford a uniform standard of right and wrong.

What the constitution of man gives us reason to expect, therefore, is fully realized in the history of God's dealings with him. A series of revelations, commencing before the fall, was kept up for four thousand years, thus evincing God's sense of our incompetency to do without them. Even while man was yet holy, God communed with him of things material to his virtue and happiness, thus showing that a holy condition of the moral faculties, did not supercede the necessity of a special tutelage and supervision from our heavenly Father.

And now, I ask, has a change come over the nature of man, to make him more independent of influences direct from God, than ever? It is true we have the letter of the finished revelation; but how powerless is it, where the Spirit does not carry it home to the heart! God demands a worship that shall consist, not merely in the exercise of the intellect, in contemplating revealed truth, but of the spiritual affections. All the samples of worship furnished in the Bible, evidently include these, as may be instanced in the case of Mary, when she said, My *soul* doth magnify the Lord, and my *spirit* doth rejoice in God my Saviour. But can the Bible ensure this kind of worship, without the aid of the

Holy Spirit? How many have enlarged acquaintance with its contents, and are acute in their reasonings upon them, who have no corresponding affections! They are like mere critics in poetry, who, with all their knowledge of the rules of that art, have not the soul of the sentiment to qualify them for writing a good poem. Just so, unless our pious affections are kindled, our worship can amount to nothing more than a cold exercise of the reason, and of course can neither exert over ourselves a transforming influence, nor be acceptable to Him who looketh upon the heart.

But to enjoy this state of the affections, there must be a communion of the human with the divine Spirit. And this communion does not necessarily take place through the channel of the intellect. It is sometimes effected through sounds falling on the ear, when no idea is conveyed; as in the exquisite strains of pious music from a harp or an organ, lifting up the soul to God in a way that no exercise of simple intellect can do it. And the communion between two human spirits, is sometimes independent of thoughts conveyed to the mind. A capricious patient, who will resist the most convincing arguments that one man may offer to his reason, to induce him to take a certain medicine, may receive it freely from his favorite nurse, merely

because she is in his confidence, or is able to touch the delicate chords of his feelings. If between our grosser natures, therefore, there exists such a mingling of heart with heart, dare we assume that he who is all Spirit, cannot take the human soul into a communion with himself, which shall be independent of all the ordinary channels of communication between mind and mind! Those who suppose that the perceiving faculty is the only point of contact and communion between the soul and God, cannot know much of the real elements of spirit, or of the facts of human nature. We have only to acquaint ourselves with these, to be convinced that the gift of the Holy Spirit, to make our bodies his temples and to live in constant communion with our spirits, is every way appropriate to our nature and constitution. This, together with the written word, is God's perfected arrangement, both for filling the chasm in our means of necessary knowledge, and to satisfy the aspirations of our spiritual instincts.

2. But there are many interesting points of *relation* between the Spirit's agency in the church, and what had gone before in the previous dispensations. That the Spirit of God, prior to his descent on the day of pentecost, was the animating principle in pious men, I do not deny. But his manifestation on that occasion,

so far exceeded all that had gone before, that it became the characteristic of the new dispensation. It had been before that, only occasional, being unprovided with any fixed organ to the human mind. God had appeared to the patriarchs by dreams, visions, angel visits, and through various channels for communicating his will. But at Sinai, he provided a definite arrangement of outward means, with which, when the people observed them according to his appointment, he had pledged his honor to be always present.

When Moses had fastened the sockets, put in the bars, reared the pillars and spread abroad the covering of the tabernacle; when he had deposited in it the ark and set up the vail; and thus when the whole work was finished and committed to the care of its consecrated priests in their sacred vestments, according to the pattern shown in the mount, "then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle." "And when the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in all their journeys: but if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till it was taken up." Thus, the efficiency or animating principle in that institution of worship, was not in the tabernacle and its utensils, nor its officiating priests; nor in the twelve tribes dis-

posed in beautiful order on every hand ; but it was in the cloud that rested down upon the whole, as the symbol of God's presence.

Precisely thus is it with the gospel church. The organ is different, but still it is nothing but an organ, of which the Spirit of God is the soul, the life and the power. And hence, after our Saviour had brought all its parts together, and every outward arrangement for the new dispensation was complete, he required his disciples to tarry still at Jerusalem, till they should be endued with power from on high. The celestial glory must rest down on the church, before she could make even such facts as the life, teaching, death, and resurrection of Christ had supplied, effectual to the salvation of a single soul. "It is expedient for you," said Jesus to his disciples, "that I go away ; for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you : but if I depart, I will send him unto you." My death, resurrection and ascension must be added to what I have already done, before the Spirit can be given and the efficiency for the salvation of this world made complete. "When he the spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth : for he shall not speak of himself ; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak : and he shall show you things to come : for he shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you." He shall not come to

add to the revelation ; for that is complete in me ; but he shall be in your minds the realization and the animating principle of the revelation already made ; as the visible glory of God in the tabernacle, while it added nothing to the outward fixtures of that structure, imparted to it its sole value as an instrument of good to mankind.

Thus, as the revelation at Sinai exceeded any thing previously enjoyed ; and as fixed arrangements were made for the communication of God's will permanently to the people, whenever they should conform to the prescribed conditions ; so the Spirit, on the day of pentecost, was not only given in larger measure than ever before, but provision was made for him to take up his abode in the hearts of God's children, as their present efficiency in doing good, and as the earnest of their future inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession to the praise of God's glory. As the tabernacle and temple were a type and forerunner of the Christian church ; as the sacrifice of the paschal lamb looked forward to the atonement of the Son of God upon the cross ; and as the priesthood of Aaron was merged in that of our Saviour ; so all the miraculous communications of God to man in the previous dispensations, were forerunners and adumbrations of the present office-work of the Holy Spirit in the church.

The Shechinah or visible glory of God on the mercy seat, the urim and thummim, the sacred ephod, the inspiration of prophets and wise men, the intermediation of angels, and the fire that ever and anon came down from heaven to consume the victim, now find their successor in the more intimate, more constant, more satisfactory gift of the Holy Spirit, to take up his abode in the church.

God's previous communications had been through signs of various descriptions acting upon the senses and the imagination; but now it is by an influence acting directly on the spiritual affections, and bringing them into such a state of purity and light, as to render them safe guides in all matters of life and conduct. And to this doubtless the apostle alludes, when he said to his brethren, The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him. If this language means any thing, it means that the Holy Spirit exerts upon believers an influence, that renders them, as it were, instinctively sensible to the difference between right and wrong, so that they are not like others, dependent on exterior helps in casuistry; for the law is written on their inward parts and they

have only to follow up the tendencies of the new nature begotten within them, to enjoy all the adornments of virtue and all the supports of immortal hope. The language was taken from the consecration of kings and priests by means of the sacred chrism, when an influence, like that in the case of Saul giving him another heart, and in that of David stirring him up to deeds of piety and valor, was supposed to diffuse itself through the mind of the person anointed, as the oil went over his body. So, when the word is applied to the sinner's mind and he receives its ingrafting, or commits himself fully to it, then an influence is diffused through his soul, which is over and above any thing that the word itself could impart, an influence such as the apostle desired upon his brethren in still larger and larger measures, filling them with all the fulness of God. Then it is that the fire comes down, not upon an altar of stone, but upon the fleshly tables of the heart, consuming the carnal and selfish passions, and melting the soul into the will of God.

3. As to the question, whether the baptism of the Holy Ghost, in the sense already explained, was designed for *permanency* in the church, little need be said. As the accident of inspiration and miracle attended it, as enjoyed by a portion of the primitive church, I fear that multitudes of

Christians are contenting themselves with an exceedingly low order of spiritual influence, under the notion that nothing better is provided for them. Having no faith, therefore, in the possibility of such a blessing, how can it be expected that they should enjoy it?

But how should our Saviour speak of the baptism of the Holy Ghost, as "*the* promise of his Father," as the blessing which he died, rose again and ascended to heaven, or went away to procure, and thus make it the grand characteristic of his dispensation, if it was intended only for the little handful of his personal followers, or for the primitive church? Is not this the standing living substance, of which all previous divine communications, were but the type and the forerunner? Is it not in such a heavenly baptism, that we are to realize Christ in us the hope of glory, God dwelling in our hearts and making our bodies his earthly temple and his throne; yea, is not this his peculiar, his chosen method of meeting the wants of our spiritual nature, and of creating in us an efficiency for the conquest of the world?

But we depend not upon doubtful reasonings for the establishment of this point. We have the positive testimony of our Saviour, that he would pray the Father and he would give us another Comforter, *who should abide with us*

FOREVER. This is the true fire coming down from heaven to burn up the victim, on which account it is compared to that element? There sat upon them cloven tongues like as of *fire*, and we are commanded not to *quench* the Spirit. Can it be supposed, therefore, that *such* a gift, the substance of such a previous adumbration as that which gave life and power both to the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations, a gift with which is identified the sole efficiency of Christianity in obtaining the dominion of the world, was designed only for a single age, and that Christians *now* are to expect no other baptism of the Holy Spirit, than what consists in having kind, amiable and virtuous tempers, principles and habits? Do conversions, as they usually exist among us, or piety in its ordinary measure and proportion, contain the only realization of spiritual influence at present possible to the church? Is this all we are to expect from a gift introduced by such glowing harbingers, and by scenes so painful and glorious as those spread out between the crucifixion and ascension?

Alas, these views, like too much of our theology, are manufactured, not to suit the Bible, but the actual state of things among professors of religion. Many of them, I grant, have no other Holy Ghost, and no other divine fulness, than what consists in being moral, amiable and virtu-

ous men ; and some I fear have not as much as this. But shall we set up our experience against the promise of Christ ? Because *we* have experienced nothing to answer to that fulness of the Spirit, enjoyed by the primitive church and introduced by our Saviour with so much solemnity, shall we therefore conclude that it is not among the present gifts of our interceding High Priest ? Is not Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day and forever ?

It is true that miracle and inspiration, were in some cases concomitants of the Spirit's work, in the primitive church, to assist her incipient efforts to triumph over human malignity and prejudice. But these were the accidents of that age, and not inherent to the gift itself. Speaking the word in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, involves neither inspiration nor miracle, but merely those influences which are ordinary and permanent among eminently spiritual Christians. These, and not miracle, were the things that made the word, in the hands of primitive ministers, the power of God unto salvation. And these it is our privilege to enjoy. Let us no more, therefore, excuse the low measure of spiritual influence among us, under the plea, that the baptism of the Holy Ghost is not at present to be expected. No, let us claim our Saviour's promise, that he that believeth in Him, out of him

shall flow rivers of living water. Let us impute our inefficiency to its real cause, the low order of our faith and expectation in reference to enjoying the Spirit's fulness. According to our unbelief, so it is done unto us.

CHAPTER XIV.

SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED—ATTITUDE OF MIND
NECESSARY TO RECEIVE THE SPIRIT—ITS EF-
FECTS—MEANS FOR ENJOYING IT IN ENLARGED
MEASURES.

I. As to the *attitude* of mind in which the spirit must be received, having already spoken to some extent, less need be said in this place. It seems to me that the Holy Spirit comes to a man's relief, at that point where, convinced of the fitness of all the gospel requires, he has made up his mind to live up to its claims, and is putting forth the endeavor to carry out this determination. Every convicted sinner, when he reaches this point, finds how impossible it is for him to withstand the law in his members; and there he would remain till he sunk to hell, did not the Holy Spirit beget in him those divine affections which enable him to fulfil the law. Hence the propriety of the language, the Law is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.

This appears to have been the attitude of mind in which the apostles received the bless-

ing. Their design of obeying Christ in all things, was fully settled; though they wanted the firmness, the courage, the confidence and the power of carrying it into execution. Our Lord, aware of this, directed them to tarry at Jerusalem till they should be endued with power from on high. Accordingly, they remained fifty days after the crucifixion, praying, waiting and looking for some gift of whose nature they as yet had no definite idea. All this time, however, there was no defect of intention to do the will of their Master.

The three thousand, also, were pricked in the heart under the sermon of Peter, and under the poignancy of their guilt, they inquired what they should do, in a manner indicating their intention to do it, be it what it might. And no sooner were they informed as to what was required of them, than they proceeded to the doing of it, in the best way they could. In this attitude of obeying the truth, therefore, the Spirit met with them, as Peter had promised, filling them with gracious affections, and thus making services that would otherwise have been intolerable, a source of joy and gladness. Such also, was the manner in which Saul of Tarsus, Cornelius and his household, and all the primitive converts, received the Holy Spirit. This accords to the statement in Acts 5 : 32, that the

Holy Ghost is a gift that God bestows on them that *obey* him ; that is, those whose wills or voluntary powers, are in a condition of subjection to the truth.

When the convicted sinner has come to the point of surrendering to the truth, he finds himself obstructed by a law in his members, warring against the law of his mind, and bringing him into captivity to the law of sin and death. Hence, the things he would, he cannot do ; and those he would not, he is precipitated upon the doing, by a fatality that he cannot resist. And in the despair of this struggle, to do what his mind has embraced but his recreant passions cannot brook, he cries out, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? At this extreme crisis, the Holy Spirit comes into his soul, takes of the things of Christ and shows them to him, and enables him to cry out in the spirit of adoption, Abba, Father. Instantly he finds himself in Christ as his wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. All sense of guilt vanishes, the law requiring supreme love to God and equal love to men, he finds not only accordant with the convictions of his reason, but with every pulsation of his affections.

That the Spirit should be received in any other attitude of the voluntary powers, is as contradictory to the laws of accountable agency, as it is to

the word of God. As we have already spoken on this subject, however, we will only add the testimony of Bloomfield in his Notes on Gal. 5 : 22,—“ Evil works come from ourselves alone ; therefore, they are called *the works of the flesh* ; but virtuous ones require not our exertion alone, but the aid of Divine grace : therefore the apostle calls them *the fruits of the Spirit* ; the seed (namely, the intention,) being from ourselves ; but the fruit resting with God.”

II. We come now to consider more fully, the *effects* or indications of the Spirit's presence in the soul and in the church. It is not to be supposed, that the infinite God would take up his abode in a man's soul, without leaving upon his character and condition, extraordinary tokens of the Divine presence. Would the king spend a night in the cottage of a peasant, without leaving behind him some token of the royal bounty ? Yea, would he come there to take up his abode, without imparting to the residence and plantation, an aspect suited to his kingly state ?

Much less will the infinite God live in a man's soul, without gracious indications of the royal munificence. Even in the past dispensation, God's presence among his people manifested itself in the conquest of their enemies, in the productiveness of their soil, in the increase of their flocks and herds and in the diffusion of bloom

and beauty all abroad. Carmel's summit displayed a richer green; Hermon's acclivity with its varying belts of cloud and sunshine, sent forth more fertilizing vapor to irrigate the soil; Ophir and Tarshish poured still ampler stores into the marts of trade; the cleft rocks of Judah's mountains afforded honey in greater abundance; health smiled on every hand; while the motto of all was, every man under his own vine and figtree, none daring to molest or make him afraid. Was not Obed-edom, with his household and all that he had, rendered doubly prosperous and happy, by a three months residence of the ark of God within his doors? How much more, then, will the Spirit's indwelling invest itself with still richer and more enduring blessings, as suited to the nature of the soul!

1. Those who enjoy such a blessing will be filled with unspeakable *joy in God*. Hence, mention is made of receiving the word with the joy of the Holy Ghost. There was great joy in those places where the Lord revived his work through the labors of the apostles. The converts at Jerusalem are said to have continued daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, eating their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And Peter speaks of it, as joy unspeakable and full of glory.

This joy, even in modern times, has in some cases, almost exceeded endurance, and instances of a total prostration of the bodily strength, are by no means uncommon. This frequently happened in the family of President Edwards, and that too in the person of his wife, a lady of fine endowments, both natural and acquired. And her husband testifies that her health was never better than at that period when her bodily prostration, from a sense of Christ's amazing love, were the most frequent. Often when this theme was touched upon, she was so overwhelmed as to be unable to sustain her own weight, being borne off to her room and left there to revel amid the ecstasies of Divine love.

Such effects are by no means surprising, when we consider the greatness and glory of the cause on which they depend. God making our bodies his temple; the Holy Spirit opening to our hearts a rill from the fountain of infinite love; Christ in us the hope of glory; and we the subjects of such a transformation to his likeness, as to make it true of us, that "as he is, so are we in this world." O, how should not emotions, too deep and powerful for endurance by our animal frames, be awakened by considerations like these? The force of those oft repeated exhortations, to rejoice in the Lord, can only be appreciated by those into whom the Spirit has come with all his gifts and graces.

2. Another effect of the Spirit's indwelling, is that of a *peculiar insight into the Scriptures*. To unfold the word of Christ, to give us an insight into the fulfillment of the Old Testament in him, to apply the promises so as to enable us to rest upon them as our own, and to make every thing pertaining to the kingdom of God plain and easy, is peculiarly the office-work of the Spirit. "When he the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, he shall testify of me; he shall guide you into all truth; he shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you." These passages imply, that the Spirit shall enlighten those in whom he dwells in every revelation of the Old and New Testament Scriptures, in God's providential government of the world, and in all those parts of his great administration, which are subjected to our inspection. And so it happens to all who are filled with the Spirit. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him. The highest order of intellect, with the best possible helps from lexicographers, interpreters and philologists, in itself considered, cannot know so much of the real meaning and force of the Bible, as the feeblest of all those who are favored with the fulness of the Spirit's illumination.

3. *An extraordinary power of overcoming difficulties*, is another effect of the Spirit's in-

dwelling. It was "through the power of the Spirit," that the apostles were endowed with the miraculous gifts and preternatural courage, that enabled them to cope successfully with the consolidated strength of all nations. And the same powers he will again impart to the church, when the exigencies of her circumstances require it. For God has promised, that as her day is, so shall her strength be.

At present, those who believe, experience his sustaining influence under the evils of life. Amid their sorest calamities, they still rejoice in hope of the glory of God. He gives them strength, also, to overcome the temptations of the devil and the allurements of the world. They are of God and overcome their spiritual foes ; because greater is he that is in them, than he that is in the world. Yes, a more powerful energy, than all the combined forces of evil, works in those who are filled with all the fullness of God.

As soon as Christians are filled with Spirit, the difficulties in the way of a revival vanish. Ministers deliver their message, not in words only, but in power and in the Holy Ghost. The truth, being melted into their own souls, comes from their lips like a two edged sword, cutting on every hand and prostrating to the feet of sovereign mercy, the most obdurate and aban-

doned. Preaching ceases to be a mere catering to curiosity, to intellect, or to earthborn sympathies, and becomes an assault upon the spiritual affections—a voice from the eternal throne, agitating the soul to its centre ; and every one is astonished at the man, because he speaks as one having authority and not as the Scribes, not in the dry, drivelling and soulless strain of ordinary pulpit exhibitions.

Yea, those who enjoy this blessing are able to meet death with composure. They even desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Their faith is an ennobling and comprehensive exercise, taking in eternity, expatiating amid invisible glories, bringing them into happy companionship with the church of the First Born whose names are written in heaven, and is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen. The Spirit in their hearts is the earnest and actual realization of heaven. Its undying joy pours its sweet current through the soul, its peace flows in upon them like a river, and they feel an assurance that their light afflictions which are but for a moment will work for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Every thing connected with religion is rendered easy and happy by the indwelling God. All the graces of the spirit, faith, hope and love, that otherwise seemed impossible,

now become easy, flowing forth from the soul like an exuberant fountain, springing up into everlasting life. Oh glorious blessing, divine state, ineffable life !

4. *The power of extensive usefulness* is another concomitant of this spiritual baptism. In connexion with personal sanctification to those who enjoy the Spirit's fulness, are streams of usefulness to their fellow-men, breaking forth on every hand, to render hundreds, and perhaps thousands and millions happier for the gracious influence. This it is, that accounts for the extreme fertility of Baxter's mind in arguments and persuasions with lost men to be reconciled to God. What untold numbers have been refreshed, comforted and saved, by means of those streams of truth and holy love which have issued from his exuberant pen ! Not force of native intellect, nor superiority of acquired endowments, but the baptism of the Holy Ghost, made Whitefield one of the brightest lights of his age, filling two continents with the splendor of his illumination. This no doubt was the secret energy, also, that wrought in the soul of Howard, carrying him into the deep dungeon of the prisoner, to soften his stony pillow, to dispel the vapors of his noxious abode by genial breezes, and to shed rays of love and mercy in a region before unpenetrated by their heavenly light. It was the fire com-

ing down from heaven and consuming the victim on the altar of Bunyan's heart, that kindled his uncultivated powers to an energy of pious thinking, that has left his name to an enviable immortality. Yea, from the age of Him on whom rested the Spirit without measure, to this moment, all who have done great service in extending that kingdom which is not of this world, have enjoyed that extraordinary measure of Divine influence, which I call a baptism of the Holy Ghost.

It is so now. The individual who enjoys this peculiar blessing in the highest degree, is the one to shed around him the best influences. The family in which he dwells, the church to which he belongs, the neighborhood in which he is a resident, the circle where he moves, the business men with whom he deals, are all made to feel the power of his piety, and are forced to confess, that, however it may be with others, that is a good man and full of faith and of the Holy Ghost.

Now, all the real power of the church for building up spiritual religion, is in the hands of this class of members. The others may fabricate creeds or contend about them; may build meeting houses and provide their fixtures; may see to it that the church has an air of fashion and respectability in the eyes of the world; may collect and supervise our charitable funds; may

preach intellectually, metaphysically, eloquently, and touch a thousand tender chords of sentiment; but the anointing that abideth does not follow. All their influence, therefore, though it may run through years of unprecedented popularity, will be cut off like foam upon the water. "Without me, ye can do nothing."

III. What importance must attach to the *means* of obtaining this spiritual baptism! Here lies the hope of the church, and through her, of the world, to whom she is given as the organ of God's power in salvation. How solemn, how serious, how weighty, therefore, are the considerations that cluster round the inquiry, how may Christians obtain this divine fulness? That it is not generally enjoyed, is my painful conviction. Though I purpose not to go into the theory of the thing, how men can be converted without it; yet that they are so, in the common acceptance of conversion, without any experience answering to the views which the Scriptures give of this subject, does seem to me too clear to require showing. And it must be made otherwise,

1. *By a more thorough development in the church at large, and especially its ministers,—of what belongs to the office work of the Holy Spirit in the plan of redemption.* Till we arrive at this result, our conversions can never undergo essential improvement. Any one who shall

compare the religious literature of our own times with that of the seventeenth century, for instance, will see that though we have more show, more stir, more finery and attempt at effect, we have not that acquaintance with the deep things of God which has been enjoyed at some former periods. Selections from the works of Owen, Howe, Baxter and others, will show this. The difference is like that between two pugilists, one of whom comes upon the arena with the calm consciousness of his own superior strength, proceeding to the combat with dignity and a strict observance of the prescribed rules, expecting to win in the end, what he fails to secure by his first blows. While the other, with small calibre, is endeavoring to supply, by the heat and vehemence of present effect, what he has not the power of carrying out and sustaining through a protracted warfare.

Those old divines did battle upon the giant evils of the world, with calm confidence in the power of the Cross and the sufficiency of the Spirit's resources, for all desirable, all possible reforms. But we, having almost lost the knowledge whether there be any Holy Ghost, are pushing in this direction, and pushing in that; dealing blows, *now* at intemperance, *now* at licentiousness, *now* at slavery; *now* for the production of revivals, *now* upon the multiplication of

men and money for missions and Bible distribution ; and in the midst of it all, relying more upon public sentiment and upon pulling the various strings of popular influence, than upon such exemplifications of the Spirit's power in us, as is necessary to the calm, persevering and successful prosecution of the great enterprise of benevolence. Such is my confidence in the power of those influences which cluster round the Cross, in accomplishing all desirable reforms, that, could the same amount of interest be produced among Christians at large, to enjoy the baptism of the Holy Spirit, or to realize in themselves all that grace can do for a soul in this world, that is felt in some of our reforming schemes, I believe that even those schemes would more rapidly advance to their desirable issues ; while on every hand would be seen, in addition, the joy and peace of an indwelling Saviour and the triumphant hope of a better world. But I am sorry to say, that the atmosphere breathed by our most zealous and blustering reformers, seems to me extremely remote from that of Jesus of Nazareth, and the primitive church. If the latter were filled with all the fulness of God, the former cannot be. Nor can it be made otherwise, till our desires and efforts are turned into the same channel with theirs, and we take similar views of the necessity of being endued with power from on high, in

order to a successful prosecution of the work of Christian philanthropy.

2. *Confidence in the attainableness of this divine fulness*, is necessary to our enjoying it. According to thy faith, so be it done unto thee, is a rule which our Saviour has himself established. To him that believeth all things are possible. So long as a doubt lingers in our minds, as to the possibility of our enjoying any special fulness of the Holy Spirit, we never shall enjoy it. To obviate such doubts, therefore, God has centered more promises to this point, than to almost any other. "If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give *the Holy Spirit* to them that ask him? Here, you see, the blessing which God is so much more willing to bestow on his suppliant children, than we are bread upon our starving families, is neither temporal good, nor the happiness of heaven; but the Holy Spirit for our personal sanctification, and to arm us for extending the philanthropic conquests of Immanuel. Having touched this point, we must leave the reader to search out the vast number of promises and

predictions, both in the Old and New Testaments, which cluster around the believer, to give confidence and intensity to him in seeking such a fullness of the Spirit, as will enable him to get out of self and into God.

3. To succeed, we must seek this blessing with our *whole heart*. When Christians have their minds enlarged, by contemplating the promises and acquainting themselves with the conspicuous position which the Scriptures assign to the work of the Spirit, in the plan of redemption, and when they lay themselves on God's altar determined to die there, rather than not succeed in obtaining the blessing, then God will pour it out upon them to a degree, that there shall not be room to receive it.

It was thus that the church in Jerusalem obtained the baptism of the Holy Ghost. For fifty days, especially the last ten of them, they all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus and with his brethren. Cornelius and his household received the baptism of the Holy Ghost, during the four days which they had devoted to fasting and prayer. Saul of Tarsus struggled through three days of agony and blindness, after his conversion, before he obtained the blessing. These examples may teach us what kind of praying, how earnest,

how determined, how self-sacrificing, is necessary to the enjoyment of this heavenly fulness. O that all Christians and ministers felt this! O that one mighty feeling of prayer, were going up from all the redeemed, that God by his Spirit would come in and sup with them and they with him.

4. This blessing must be sought by *self-denial*. We must be emptied of self, in order to be filled with God. Our style of living must be on the simplest possible scale, and our worldly gratifications must be brought within limits so narrow, that at least we shall not set our hearts upon them. This will leave us more of our income to exercise upon charity, more of our time to give to meditation, more of our thoughts and sympathies for prayer; and in this way we shall acquire that deadness to the world and life to God, which was so conspicuous a feature of our Saviour's character. O the joy of dying to self and living to benevolence, and of being crucified with Christ, so that it shall not be we that live, but Christ that shall live in us! Our Saviour and his apostles have given us an illustrious example of self-denial, in the work of benevolence. Though rich, for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich. The apostles, also, gave up the endearments of home,

relinquished their prospects of worldly preferment, and became the reputed offscouring of all things, in furtherance of God's designs of mercy to man. In the footsteps of these illustrious examples, therefore, we must follow, if we would enjoy the divine fulness.

Whitefield was conducted to the blessing through a painful process of self-denial. He fasted himself sick, and denied himself in dress to such a degree, that the young nobleman who gave him a certain amount at the University for personal services, dismissed him for shame of so shabby a groom. And, though all this was done in a legal spirit, and without clear views of a salvation by grace, yet it indicated his extreme earnestness after heavenly blessings; and, in answer to his self-denying seekings, God poured out upon him such a measure of his Spirit, before he took "holy orders," that under his first sermon, the whole congregation was moved, and the Lord gave demonstration to his word with signs following. Thus, by exercising ourselves unto holiness, through the practice of self-denial, we shall obtain a blessing proportioned to our seeking.

5. *Wilful sinning* must be given up, if we would be honored with the Spirit's indwelling. For a Christian to make his belief, that no one

can arrive at perfection in this world, an occasion for *intending* to go on in this, that or the other course of wrong feeling or wrong doing, is to jeopard his prospects of salvation. No; there is no known sin that we must not strive even unto the death, to have annihilated from our characters. What, shall we deliberately carry daggers in our bosom, with which to stab that Saviour who has died to redeem us from all iniquity? While we are doing this, how can we enjoy a baptism of the Holy Spirit?

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy. What a thought is this! Thy body a temple of the Holy Ghost! And shall I pollute it with sin? Shall I grieve, quench, and resist my heavenly Comforter, my indwelling Sanctifier? Will he dwell in a corrupted temple, or lend himself to an unholy companionship? Can the love of God coexist with cherished selfishness? To have this divine fulness, must we not calculate to give up all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord? And, when we fail so to do, through the weakness of our natures, or the power of our temptations, must we not, with deep repentance, lay our cause before our supreme Advocate with the Father,

Jesus Christ the righteous, and beseech him to so cleanse us from our secret faults, that the Holy Spirit may still continue his abode in our souls? Cast me not away from thy presence and take not thy Holy Spirit from me.

CHAPTER XV.

ON ANALYZING AND COMBINING THE ELEMENTS OF A REVIVAL.—INTERNAL ELEMENTS.

IN this, as in other subjects, analysis will doubtless be found a direct road to truth and to power. That it must stop with the surface of knowledge, as applied to the operations of that Agent who is like the unseen wind, is no objection against using it, because the result is the same in all matters of investigation. The properties, not the substance or interior nature of things, are alone cognizable to philosophy.

In the subject before us, the question is what elements or things are present on those occasions, when the moral power of the church is in a train of most successful exercise? When we have found out what these things are, we shall be able to judge, whether they are within the reach of Christians, at times and in places, when and where this power is not at present in a course of successful exercise. It is by analysis, that the apothecary ascertains how to com-

bine the ingredients of a given medicine. So, as a genuine revival of religion is the form which the moral and social elements assume, when God is shining out of Zion the perfection of beauty, we must look at the component elements of such a gracious visitation, in order to learn the art of ensuring their presence in places where they do not now exist. Our attempt in a department like this, especially in the narrow limits of a concluding chapter, must necessarily be exceedingly imperfect.

It seems a little singular that the manifestations of human nature in this department should have been nearly two thousand years, a matter of history, without eliciting more in the shape of dispassionate philosophic inquiry concerning them. Much as has been written on the manifestations of the intellect and the moral sentiments, the higher qualities of the spiritual nature, in their manifestations as connected with revivals, have rarely been approached by the scrutinies of investigation. Those powerful excitements, connected with the triumph of these qualities over all grosser passions and interests, seem to be ranked with witchcraft, as unfit to trespass on the precincts of science. And yet who can compute the magnitude of the blessing accruing from such occasions? The drunkard forsakes his cups, the profane exchange their

oaths for prayers, the Bible succeeds to the romance as the book of delightful entertainment, while either the agony of guilt, the fear of hell and horrors of despair blacken the features ; or, the joys of pardon, love and immortal hope beat in every heart or beam in every face. It is true that Edwards and others have given more or less attention to this subject.

By scrutinizing the things that go to make up a revival, we shall find them *internal* and *external*, relating to the state of the affections, or to outward conduct and measures.

The internal, or a revival state of the affections, is that which arises from the fulness of the Holy Spirit. Those excitements, of which there are many, that spring up without this fulness, are mere imitations, which, however they may deceive at the time, leave no permanent blessing behind. They arise from the pride of distinction, from a competition of numbers between different churches, or from some accidental cause of excitement, that spends its force without probing the heart to the bottom, or annihilating its cherished corruptions. Hence, no permanent blessing is left behind, Christians are not improved in the arts of holy living, the repentance that for the moment produced such contortions, needs to be repented of, and the converts, in the end, become seven fold more

the children of hell than they were before. Nor can any thing make it otherwise, till those who are active in the work are so purged from their old sins that the Holy Spirit can take up his undisturbed abode in their hearts.

1. Among the manifestations of the Spirit, on such occasions, that of *a passion for conversions to holiness*, holds a conspicuous place. Without a desire for the salvation of souls, amounting to an absorbing and all controlling passion, there can be no genuine revival. It is this that awakens the agony of prayer, denoted by the expressive figure of travailing pains in Zion, and travailing in birth for souls till Christ be formed in them.

As to how this feeling was awakened, whether by means of an alarming death, by fifty days praying as in the Church at Jerusalem, or by other instrumentalities, provided only the thing exist in its depth and its genuineness, is quite immaterial. Measures are not the things to be controverted, so much as the spirit with which we embark in them. There are a thousand specific varieties in them, some of which might be more successful on one occasion, and some on another. For Christians, therefore, to waste their efforts in contending about them, is as irrational as for the divisions of a victorious army, to embark in a war among themselves, because the

victory was not achieved by the sword or the bayonet, the musketry or the cannon, or by other modes of warfare, that happened to be favorites with each. The question is not, *how* a community came by this absorbing sense of the necessity of conversion from sin to holiness, but simply whether it actually exists among them.

Now, this passion was a predominant influence with Jesus and his inspired apostles. They presumed not to touch the civil relations of their converts; but taught them subjection to forms of government of the most oppressive character, from which too, their own devotion to the public weal was requited with naught but oppression and cruelty. They even soothed their feelings to the patient endurance of so unnatural a condition as that of slavery, teaching them that they might still be Christ's freemen. The peculiar work of enthroning God in the affections, to which they exclusively devoted themselves, could be accomplished in the most unjust and oppressive forms of civil and social life, not less than in those which embodied more righteous and benignant principles. And where collision with the powers that be was unavoidable, they had no other means of achieving the victories of truth, than that of yielding themselves unresisting victims to the public indignation.

While others cry lo here, this domestic abuse

must be corrected ; or lo there, that political evil must be reformed ; or this ignorance must be dispelled by the emitted rays of science ; and thus, while a thousand specific reforms are clamorously urged, those who fully enter into the evangelical spirit, feel themselves committed to the single object of converting men from sin to holiness. They deem that imparting to the ignorant a well regulated conscience, corrected estimates of moral and religious subjects and the various features of the new man in Christ, will accomplish upon them all that can be desired in the present world besides raising them to the rewards of everlasting life. They trace all the branches of evil that spread their pernicious luxuriance over the human condition, to the debasement of the spiritual affections, and believe that by cutting off the sources whence their nourishment comes, the whole must die.

This is the philosophy of all revival feeling. The perfect simplicity of its aim might do much, even apart from Divine influence, to explain the mystery of its efficiency. Its object, in addition to being one and identical, has the merit of controlling the whole mass of facts with which it stands connected. Every thing is right or wrong with a man, according as his heart is right or wrong in the sight of God. Conversion to holiness sets the internal powers right, and of course,

extends its influence to all the outward developments of the man. It corrects the views of religion; it subdues the appetites and passions; it improves the social feelings; it leads to the due exercise of the bodily appetites and faculties; it brings the purest joy, gives the most invincible courage under suffering, and produces an abounding in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.

Who does not see in such a change, reasons for all the interest to accomplish it, which is ever felt under the most enthusiastic impulses of the revival influence? The absence of this interest is always occasioned by an abatement of spiritual religion. The value of the soul, its exposure to an endless hell, the glory of Christ, and the necessity of faith in him, in order to salvation, are all lost sight of; and of course, sermons, prayers, and every means of grace lose their power over the conscience. Whatever abates this interest, therefore, though in the form of an angel of light, must be odious in God's account, because it is adverse to the enthroning of his Son on this footstool. And one of the most alarming features of our enterprises for bringing public sentiment to bear upon the overthrow of existing evils, is the extent to which they are withdrawing the sympathy of Christians from the conversion of sinners.

Life is so short, eternity so long, and the judgment seat so near, that it is better to submit to some abuses in the forms of society, provided the soul can be saved, than in our attempts to rectify them, leave it to perish forever in hell. So far as these abuses are an obstruction to our object, (and I have no doubt they are so to an enormous extent,) Christians may labor for their removal. But in this, the great end of saving the soul, must not for one moment retire behind the scene. And in our union with carnal men for objects of social or civil reform, are we not compelled to keep this real end of our living, out of view? The carnal man discerneth not the things of the Spirit of God; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned.

2. Another internal element of a revival, is *an implicit resting on revealed truths*. Such a belief of these truths as the Spirit begets in us, gives them a substance in our minds and invests them with reality, the same as those things which we see, hear and converse with through the senses. We feel that God is in us and all around us. A sudden death cannot occur in a community, without leaving the impression upon all who have this faith, that God has ordered it to arouse the people from their dreams of sin to attend to their souls' concerns. And under this impression, they will do their utmost for the awakening

of survivors. They will say to them, "God is here; see how he admonishes you. He is saying to you in tones of power, be ye also ready. A soul has just winged his flight to eternity. His destiny within the last hour, day, week, is fixed, and heaven or hell is his portion. Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." There must be no fiction in such language—no attempt to treat these judgments as from God when the heart does not feel it; for this would only expose us to the rebuff of the evil spirit, "Paul we know, and Jesus we know; but who are ye?"

Did ever a revival occur among a people, when this intimate and solemn connexion with God, was not a serious and awful reality to more or less of their number? Sinners themselves, even the most obdurate among them, though destitute of this faith, feel the influence through sympathy or some other principle, and a solemn sense of God comes over them. They feel themselves penetrated through and through with the eyes of his justice and holiness. Every rock, tree, forest, flying cloud, and the whole visible scenery, in the place where the revival occurred, seem to those who are conscious of the influence, to be full of God. And so powerful is the impression, that if they were to return to the place after being many years absent, the circumstances of that revival would be recalled with more distinctness,

than any other fact of their experience while they resided there.

And who will say that this impression of being surrounded with God is a fictitious sentiment? Is it not justified by every page of the Bible? Are not the instincts of the Divine existence, of right and wrong, and of immortality, these spiritual and retributive elements of our constitution, given us for the purpose of maintaining it in our souls? God would not have a moment of consciousness pass with us, without this sense of intimate and constant connexion with Himself. And hence his grace teaches us, that whether we eat or drink or whatever we do, to do all to the glory of God. O, this is blessed living, to feel that we are always with God. Nothing but sin has deprived us of this feeling. It has blinded our spiritual discernment, so that in the midst of a universe of mementos to God's presence and glorious attributes, we are stupidly insensible of them. And this erasure of the impression of God from our souls, is a more dreadful indication of our depravity, than even robbery, theft and murder. And no return to holiness can be effected, no revival can exist which will not eventuate in still deeper and deeper spiritual darkness, till the sentiment of a present God is again restored.

The interference of the devil, also, in the affairs of men, is a reality with those who have

this faith. Though unperceived by their bodily senses, his presence, in their view, is as real and substantial as the invisible malaria that engenders disease, or the malignant infusion that propagates contagion. So long as Christians resolve their conflicts with the devil into a war of opposing principles, as of heat and cold or of darkness and light, they are too fleshly, too remote from the spiritual world to have a revival. Their faith is not that which gives substance to unseen truth. Did you ever know a revival to exist among those who denied to the devil a personal existence? No; such men have not implicit reliance upon God's word. They can realize nothing till they have passed it through the alembic of materialism. They do not accept the statements of the Bible on this subject in their simple plain sense, but mystify, distort and explain them away to suit them to their gross conceptions. Satan instigating the first sin; satan assembling with the sons of God in the days of Job; satan provoking David to number the people; satan tempting our Lord in the wilderness; satan instigating Judas' treachery; satan filling the heart of Ananias and Sapphira to lie to the Holy Ghost; satan desiring to have Peter that he might sift him as wheat; satan, of whose devices the apostle says Christians are not ignorant; must all be reduced to poetry and

allegory, before they can be accepted by these fleshly believers in revelation. How then can God honor with revivals those who thus dishonor his word?

Are not all who have been greatly distinguished as revivalists, been remarkable for their literal acceptance of the Bible on this subject? Who was ever more sensible of being harassed by the devil, than John Bunyan? and who ever preached the word with more awakening effects? The splendid eloquence of Robert Hall had no power to move the spiritual sentiments, compared with that of the honest tinker. Luther, also, and Knox and Whitefield and Wesley were as remarkable for their conflicts with the devil, as for their transcendent power in revivals. And the same is true to this day. Whenever such a work is in progress among a people, they are always sensible to the counterworking of satanic agency. If we have not faith enough to literally accept God's word on this subject, we have not enough for a revival.

When we have this faith, O how real it will appear to us, that the impenitent are sinking to hell by hundreds and thousands! What energy will it impart to our exertions for pulling them out of the fire! What confidence shall we have in the electing love of God, and the certainty that the preaching of Christ and him crucified,

will turn to the salvation of some of them ! We know that Christ must see the travail of his soul, and that the means which he has appointed for this purpose, must prove effectual. They cannot fail of being the power of God unto salvation. We take firm hold on the promise, that the heathen shall be given to him for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession. We rest upon the omnipotence of God's revealed truth over the spiritual elements of man's nature, and are sure that his word cannot return to him void. Hence, we speak with authority, like men that expect to be believed.

How real, also, is the crucifixion of Christ to us ! Never can the writer of these pages lose the first impression upon his mind of this great central fact in the history of redemption. It came like a note from eternity, a note of infinite love ; the adorable Lamb of God dying that *he* might live ! And is not this the experience of all who have tasted the good word of God ? How much force is there in that language of Paul to the Galatian converts, *Before whose eyes* Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you. Though many miles from the scene of the crucifixion, and not hearing of it till long after it took place ; yet their faith made it as real as an event passing under the observation of the senses. How many millions have

had a like view of Christ upon the cross, a view that had all the effect of an event in which they had a personal interest ! Yea, seeing the crucifixion with the bodily eyes, apart from the faith to take in its spiritual connexions, could do no more for us, than it did for those who actually surrounded his cross. It is the faith that takes in these connexions, that gives the crucifixion its vast influence in the spiritual world. It makes those who have it, feel that they have been guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. Nor is it possible for a revival to exist in a community where this feeling does not to some extent prevail. The church and its minister must have their hearts melted to tenderness in view of the cross ; sinners must thence derive the repentance that needeth not to be repented of ; and the burdened soul must thither come, before he can realize the joys of pardon and immortal hope. Now, the same arguments that go to show that Christians may, at any and all times, be filled with the Holy Spirit, go also to prove that they may combine the internal elements of a revival ; for the latter arise from the former.

CHAPTER XVI.

ON ANALYZING AND COMBINING THE ELEMENTS
OF A REVIVAL.—EXTERNAL MANIFESTATIONS
OF SUCH A WORK.—CONCLUSION.

HAVING seen the state of mind necessary to enable an individual or individuals to propagate revival influences in a community, we come now to notice its *outward* developments. Here we suppose there is latitude for endless variety to suit the social habits, mental culture and moral tone of a people. To adopt in all cases the same mode of procedure, is like a general, under all circumstances, disposing his forces in the same order of battle. Whether protracted meetings and evangelists, for instance, should or should not be admitted, is not a subject for controversy. God decides that question by the different kind of men whom he brings into the ministry. If an individual who is altogether deserving of confidence for his piety and devotion to the work of the Lord, can do more as an evangelist, or in protracted meetings, what are

we, that we should withstand God? We ought to be thankful, that one brother can work best in one way and another in another; because by diversifying the modes of applying truth, we reach the more minds.

For brethren to set up that their modes of operating shall not be departed from, is in most cases, we fear, the fruit of bigotry and narrow views. Let me ask these brethren, how ancient is this way for which you are so earnest? Would it not have been as great a novelty, one or two generations ago, as a protracted meeting or an evangelist can be to you? But we propose to confine ourselves to those features of a revival, in which all who believe in these gracious visitations will be likely to concur. They are such as dealing in appropriate truth—using common language—taking advantage of the animal sympathies—adjusting our measures to existing religious impressions—continuity of appeal—variety of means—consecutive influences—and harmony of feeling among those engaged in the work.

1. *Dealing in appropriate truth.* Selfishness is the predominant influence in that community where no revival exists. Piety has been succeeded by worldliness, and carelessness to the interests of the soul prevails on every hand. No matter, therefore, what social virtues may

exist among the people, they are practiced without regard to God, and, of course, from some principle of selfishness that must incur the divine displeasure and bring on the eternal ruin of the soul. Now, suppose Paul were to exercise the ministry of reconciliation among them, how would he discharge its duties? Would he preach about things in general? No; he would say to himself, "Every thing among this people is the opposite of holiness, and they are conscious neither of the fact nor of the danger to which it is exposing them. And my business is to unfold truths to their view that will burn on their consciences, excite their fears, arouse their sensibilities, and bring them, in the attitude of suppliants, to the feet of sovereign mercy."

By a careful analysis of the influences present in revivals, it will be found that accurate pictures of the secret working of human depravity, as connected with its tendency to end in eternal death, have a conspicuous place. The more harrowing they are to the feelings of the impenitent, the more likely they are to succeed, provided they are presented with love and a sincere desire for their salvation. For nothing is Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost so remarkable, as this appropriateness to these depraved elements of character in his hearers. The excellence and glory of the Son of God, as evinced

by his miracles, he held up in contrast with their malignity in putting him to death. His triumphant resurrection he declared, as a proof of the impotence of their malice in endeavoring to destroy His claims to Messiahship. He called in the facts of the Spirit's power, then passing before their eyes, to give point to his argument, that those who dared resist the influence of the injured Messiah, would become his footstool to be crushed by his avenging power. Thus, he insisted upon the contrast between *His* excellence and *their* vileness, concluding the whole with the harrowing deduction, "therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God has made this Jesus whom *ye crucified*, both *Lord and Christ*." As the discourse of Peter was framed to awaken a sense of guilt, or to prick his hearers in the heart, so in all cases, our exhibitions of truth must be suited to the same end, or they never can be effectual in promoting revivals.

2. By reference to facts, also, we shall see that a *plain and simple style of address* has much to do with the influence on revival occasions. The fulness of the Holy Spirit gives a simplicity and earnestness, that find expression in such words and figures as are best suited to the mass of mind. The effort after classic elegance in speaking, is abhorrent to one whose

heart is full of love to sinners, and who is intent upon nothing so much as pulling them out of the fire. Besides, common language is best understood, and therefore, the most effectual vehicle of thought. An idea that stands out to the hearer's view in all its native proportions, will leave a stronger impression, than one whose outlines are murky and confused. The most of hearers, after a short chase of the fugitive conception, give it up and content themselves with calling the discourse elegant, profound, argumentative, to hide their own incapacity to understand what they are bound to believe is full of meaning. The real state of the case, however, appears from this, that those discourses which the hearers carry home with them are destitute of the foregoing characteristics, being simple, plain and common in their language and allusions.

Indeed, the superiority of common language, is shown by apostolic example. The first preachers spake and wrote, not in the ornate style of Homer, Xenophon and Thucydides, but in the provincial Greek of the countries overrun by the arms of that martial people. And Paul expressly states, that Christ sent him to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be of none effect. He aspired to

speak plain truth in plain language, that the faith of the converts might not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

3. *The animal sympathies* will be found to have their share of influence in revivals. This subject is so little understood, that we often hear it said, in praise of certain ministers and measures, that they are free from animal excitement. It is deemed by some the perfection of preaching to have it purely intellectual, leaving the sympathies untouched, that thus truth may leave its results upon the character, like the image on the innermost coat of the eye, in the deepest recesses of mental abstraction. Propositions are stated as coolly and with as much accuracy, as if the preacher were working out a problem in numbers, the language is highly polished, and thus the whole performance goes on as dryly as if it were designed to personate the tenants of a catacomb.

But is this mode of doing things scriptural? does it accord to the nature of man? is it the true secret of moral power? It is, indeed, conceded by most, that such is not the method for influencing the mass of uneducated and unpolished mind. *They* are supposed to need something less intellectual and more exciting. But is it not so in all cases? Can the mind, in its present state, attain to such a degree of abstraction

from the bodily sensations, as to admit of its being influenced, except as it is approached through these physical channels? Can we assail it without animal excitation? Are not sounds exciting to the ear, gustable properties to the palate, odors to the nostrils; and are not our nervous organs as a whole, soothed and quieted by certain modes of treatment, while they are thrown into disorder by others? Do not our primary ideas of harmony and discord, of beauty and deformity, of pleasure and disgust, and of desire and aversion, come from these sensible impressions?

That the perfection of our means for bringing men to think upon their souls' concerns, therefore, should consist in having them as remote as possible from their tendencies to physical excitation, does seem to me a contradiction to the plainest laws of our nature. What, thoughts drawn from the pure region of abstraction, and infused into the soul without jostling a fibre of the animal frame, the ones to be the most effectual in controlling our voluntary decisions! Such is not the course of statesmen, orators, and those whose business it is to wield a people. In addition to the mottos, songs, processions, popular harangues, and every device of the kind, to assail the public mind through all its physical channels of communication, is the imagery of their discourses, all the parts of which are nicely

suitcd to produce the highest order of animal excitement. Heat and cold, haggard want and unbounded profusion, pleasure and pain, and every thing associated with our outward condition, are continually appealed to, to give meaning and force to the great principles of state, which they are desirous of making the law of the land.

And no book does more to touch our earthly sympathies than the Bible itself. The torments of a spiritual and unseen world are depicted to us under the idea of burning men alive in a lake of fire and brimstone. Heaven, also, is painted to our view, in all the gorgeousness and splendor of the palace and capital with which a powerful earthly monarch would encircle himself. Its inhabitants are kings and priests, wearing princely crowns and sacerdotal robes, having palms of victory in their hands, and being freed from all crying and tears. Does such imagery look like esteeming it the perfection of religious efficiency, to have our appeals to the mind as remote as possible from the animal sensations? Are not the substantial facts of the gospel adapted to arouse these sensations? How should not even the body of the sinner quake at seeing himself standing over a burning hell? Or suppose a bleeding Saviour came up distinctly to his view, accompanied by the vivid impression, that he himself had inflicted the wounds of that gory

body, and he should cry out in an agony of emotion, who could impute it to him as a weakness? It is only when the basis of such excitements is fictitious, that they are inadmissible. Let them result from a lively view of momentous truth, and the very stones would cry out, if we should suppress them.

4. *Adjusting our measures to existing religious impressions.* As in the most wintry season there is sufficient caloric among the material elements, when condensed to a point, to produce combustion, so there is no period in the moral history of a community so indifferent, infidel and depraved, but that a due application of God's appointed means would not result in a revival of greater or less extent. The secret workings of conscience among the people, the dissatisfaction which they feel with their present amount of happiness, the forebodings of death and a coming judgment, the disappointments and vexations of life, and the elements of religious knowledge and impression existing among them, all constitute a train that could not fail to explode by a due adjustment of celestial truth. The burning zeal of Paul, the intrepid courage of Luther in assaulting the powers of sin, and the indomitable industry of Baxter, could be brought to bear upon scarce a community in our land, without being followed by revival influences.

Not only is man endowed with religious instincts, but in his darkest and most degraded condition, he has some means for their development. The impressions which he receives from the sensible universe constitute a basis for religious reasoning and appeal, whose importance to the preacher of the gospel cannot be duly estimated. Especially in the absence of science and civilization, from which untold millions are suffering who equally need the blessings of salvation, they constitute the only materials for beginning his work. In making known to them the being and perfections of Him who has made all these things, he has to avail himself of their breath and being; of their bodily organization, with all its parts and adaptations; of the trees, plants and every tenant of the vegetable kingdom; of the swarming myriads of life with which earth, air and ocean abound. Such was Paul's mode of addressing the pagan mind. We preach unto you, that ye should turn from these idol vanities unto the living God, who made heaven and earth, and the sea and all that are therein; who in times suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness. To the learned and curious Athenians, also, who were

addicted to the study of nature, philosophy and poetry, he incorporated similar allusions, with additional fragments of truth from the shrines at which they paid their devotions, and from the sweet numbers of their admired poets; thus adroitly grafting the doctrine of Jesus and the resurrection, upon the actual habitudes and materials of their thinking.

And the course of providence is ever more impressive of religious truth than the constitution of nature. But for the continual restraints which we undergo, from our physical necessities, from our numerous disappointments of cherished hope, from those diseases and accidents which are our certain passport to the grave, from the collisions of man with man, and from ten thousand other sources of anxiety and distress, too subtle for a name and too multiform for description,—but for all these interminglings of calamity in our experience here below, poor indeed would be our prospect of winning any heart to the love of God. By these various means, God is working to abase pride, to exhibit the emptiness of the world, and to soften the hearts of the children of men, that they may be the better prepared to receive from the hands of his church, the good seed of the kingdom. And we must avail ourselves of the advantages thus afforded us. We must watch our opportu-

nities of speaking words in season to the sick, the bereaved, and the self condemned; and we must studiously graft our communications of heavenly truth upon the present contents of different minds. Thus, we must watch for souls as those that must give account.

5. *Continuity of appeal.* However a revival may commence, it never fails of being attended by unusual frequency in the applications of truth to the mind. If the impression of one faithful sermon be followed by another and another, in a succession too rapid for the extinction of a single impression in the series, how could truth and conscience fail to secure a triumph over passion and cupidity?

Now, one circumstance that gives a revival such commanding influence, is this continuity in urging one impression after another till the baser feelings give way under the pressure of eternal realities. No ingredient of heresy need be infused to produce this result, and no concealment of revealed doctrines can facilitate it. Their effect would be, on the contrary, to defeat the object. Can poison assist the operation of a nutritive of aliment? Nothing does so much to restore the healthy action of our moral nature as the truth as it is in Jesus. Nothing burns with such power on conscience.

6. *Variety in the means of applying truth.*

As soon as the revival impulse begins to act upon a people, to whatever instrumentality it may owe its origin, it not only gives new power to the ordinary means of grace, but calls into exercise much that is extraordinary. Even common conversation becomes now a powerful auxiliary in promoting the work of the Lord. On those occasions when mirth and laughter are prominent in all that is said and done, seriousness is now impressed on every countenance, and no subject is so much talked of as religion. One has to speak of the great goodness of God to him; another of his joy of faith and comfort of love; another of the preciousness of Christ to his soul; another of his concern for poor perishing sinners; others address themselves directly to the impenitent; and thus the whole drift of the passing scene is calculated to promote the work of the Lord.

Such was the state of things in the revival at Northampton, of which President Edwards gives an account. "In all companies in those days, on whatever occasion persons met together, Christ was to be heard of and seen in the midst of them. Our young people, when they met, were wont to spend the time in talking of the excellence and dying love of Christ, the gloriousness of the way of salvation, the wonderful, free and

sovereign grace of God, his glorious work in the conversion of a soul, the truth and certainty of the great things of God's word, and the sweetness of their views of his perfections. And even at weddings, which formerly were merely occasions of mirth and jollity, there was now no discourse of any thing but things of religion, and no appearance of any but spiritual mirth."*

Visiting from house to house to urge eternal truth on the attention of the people is usual on such occasions. Whether the number that feel the heavenly influence, be few or many, so great is their concern for souls, and so powerfully are they affected in view of the multitude who are perishing in sin, that they go from individual to individual to converse with them about their immortal interests. They hunt for souls in the lurking places of the farm, the cottage, the shop, the store, and even in the mansions of the rich, that by all means they may save some.

An impenitent individual can light upon no point where he does not meet with something to remind him of his need of religion, and to set death, judgment and eternity before his view. If he attends on the ministry of the word, he hears truths that powerfully assail his conscience ; if he goes to the prayer meeting, his soul is stirred by fervent petitions in his behalf: if he

* Edwards on Revivals, p. 40.

walks by the way, he meets with some one to exhort him to flee from the wrath to come ; if he visits his neighbors, he finds them engaged in doing their utmost to carry forward the good work of the Lord ; if he retires to the open field or shady grove, the sound of secret supplication breaks upon his ears like a voice from eternity ; if he goes to his own dwelling, some friend meets him with tears and confessions, beseeching him to be reconciled to God ; and if he has a call, it is from some pious individual who has come to invite him to the inquiry meeting. Thus, it seems to him that heaven has posted its sentinels on every hand, and he cannot move, without having his way hedged up by barriers thrown by infinite mercy across his path to intercept his way to hell. Such a train of influences is too powerful for the most obdurate to resist, while the guilty and the incorrigible speedily ripen into the sin against the Holy Ghost. Is it not by some such future combination of influences, on a scale broad enough to embrace the world, that a nation is yet to be born in a day, and the kingdom and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, is to be given to the people of the saints of the most high God ?

7. *Consecutive train of influences.* As in medical treatment, the physician finds it necessa-

ry, in his progressive use of remedies, to keep pace with the several stages of his patient's disease, so in the progress of a revival, each successive effort must sustain and carry out the one that went before. Who has not seen such a state of things among a people, that the most elegant sermon ever preached, on an inappropriate and ill timed subject, would serve rather to repress than advance the work? How should it not have this effect, if it did not meet the demands of that particular crisis? The best performed music in the world would have a harsh and unpleasant effect at a funeral, if it were lively, boisterous and unsuited to express the mournful feelings of the occasion.

Nor need any one impute art and contrivance to these hints, for they accord to fact and nature. The mind of a sinner, in a process of translation from darkness to light, has its attention fixed upon a given class of truths, adapted to produce in him given impressions; and when those impressions are sufficiently matured, they lead on to other impressions, and those to others still, in a consecutive series. Intense thinking on awakening truth leads to intense feeling; the sense of guilt to the hope of pardon; the first faint dawn of such hope, advances to the perfect day of assurance, crying Abba, Father; and thus, "the goings forth" of God in the soul, "are pre-

pared as the morning." But suppose something be thrown in, at the incipient stages of the process, that should effectually divert his attention from the truths necessary to keep it up, how could it fail to break the series of impressions? Suppose it had been possible for a troop of modern soldiers to set up a roar of artillery at the door of the temple, just as Peter had closed the exordium of his sermon on the day of pentecost, and just as the concourse began to feel the solemn influence, would not the shock to their unpractised ears have effectually interrupted that series of impressions which led to their conversion? And if such a physical cause of diversion could do it, would not the more subtle infusion of inappropriate thought, working its way to the secret sources of conduct, and drawing off the mind from the heavenly influence, do much more in the same way? Suppose an actor like Garrick could have commanded the eyes and ears of that concourse, before Peter's sermon had wrought its full effect, dealing out upon their risible feelings the irresistible strokes of laughing comedy, nothing short of miraculous intervention upon the laws of mind, could have withstood its counteracting tendencies.

The principle stated is too obvious to require further confirmation. Though the Holy Spirit is a powerful agent, he does not operate alike

through the channel of all instrumentalities. He would not be as likely to convert a man under infidel lectures, as under the preaching of the Cross. Now, none are so well qualified to enter into the existing state of things, during the progress of a revival, as those who have been in it from the first. They have kept pace with its subtle phases of impressions and of course can best select and present measures and subjects adapted to every given crisis of the work. They acquire an instinctive power of distinguishing what is suitable, from what is unsuitable, both as to the matter and manner of their exhibitions and their proceedings.

A living Christian, in whom the Holy Spirit dwells, will, indeed, require but a short training to be able to make these distinctions. His soul is already in the work, and he needs only a little time to ascertain the precise state of things among the people, to qualify him for going on with his brethren, as a helper of their joy and their triumph. As soon as Barnabas had come to Antioch, and had seen the grace of God in that first of Gentile revivals, he rejoiced, and exhorted them that with purpose of heart, they would cleave unto the Lord.

8. *Harmony among those engaged in the work*, is also of great importance to a revival. "Being agreed as touching any thing we shall

ask," is specially insisted upon by our Saviour, as a condition of the certain bestowment of the blessing desired. This was the state of the infant church at Jerusalem, at the first outpouring of the Spirit. They were all "*with one accord*" in one place. They had been similarly trained under the personal influence of their Master; had been common sharers in the scene of suffering occasioned by his death; had felt the same wonder and joy at his resurrection; had bewailed together their loneliness after his ascension; had spent many days in mutual converse with each other and with God in prayer; and thus their experience from first to last, had served to melt away their constitutional or educational differences, and to produce between them such a harmony and accordance, as probably never existed between another equal number of individuals. And they appear to have always acted under the same impulse, and this was one of the instrumentalities that contributed to their astonishing success. It was a union of heart to heart, and hand to hand, in the greatest enterprise that ever enlisted the powers of man—an enterprise of salvation to a perishing world.

In order to take advantage of this principle to the fullest extent, they were parted into bands, in the organization of which, the particular tastes and aptitudes of the individuals in each, appear

to have been consulted. Hence, while Paul could not so well work with Mark, he could with Silas; and while Barnabas could not coalesce in all the views of Paul on questions of expediency, he could not with Mark, and so each band was made up of the individuals that adapted it to the greatest efficiency. And thus, the primitive laborers rarely if ever went alone to their work of evangelizing the nations.

Perhaps Christians may hereafter avail themselves, to a greater extent than they are doing it at present, of this feature of the apostolic plan. When our schisms come to give way to the coalescing spirit of approaching millenium; when bands of brethren shall really enjoy the fulness of the Holy Ghost to that degree, that carnal and selfish feelings are so consumed by the fire coming down from heaven as to make them see eye to eye and lift up their voices together; and when we take full advantage of a concert of action in going from place to place in promoting the work of the Lord, what could resist the force of our arms? The happy influence of the individuals composing such bands, upon each other, like that of a number of live coals brought in contact, would enable them to resist the dampest, coldest atmosphere, and thus to preserve the revival influence, under circumstances too adverse for either of them to withstand alone. And with

this influence among themselves, its affinity to the moral elements even in the constitution of wicked men, is such, that they could scarcely remain among a people for any length of time, without propagating it, provided they embodied the requisite talents for commanding their attention. Who can tell what is in the womb of the future, or what principles of efficiency may yet be called into requisition, in filling the whole earth with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the deep?

CONCLUSION.

LET every Christian ask himself, what element in this view of a revival, is beyond the reach of his faith. Can he not rely upon the promised fulness of the Holy Spirit? And if he has that, will he not have the passion of conversions to holiness, the faith of realization, and all the internal elements of those gracious visitations, when the moral power of the church is in successful exercise? And having these, can we be at a loss for an appropriate outward manifestation? Can we not adapt truth to the spiritual condition of those around us? Can we not arrive at a simple plain style of speaking, on plain yet momentous

subjects? Can we not adjust our measures to the animal sympathies? Is a continuity of appeal, or variety in the modes of applying truth, beyond our reach? Can we not, by prayer and a close walk with God, acquire such familiarity with the spiritual world, as to be skilful in bringing consecutive influences to bear upon a community? Is harmony or concentration, so uncongenial to us, as not to admit of our forming evangelizing bands, to act more efficiently for the salvation of our perishing race?

Christian reader, these are questions of solemn moment—questions that involve the eternal destiny of unnumbered millions. O, how much ought we to pray over them, before dismissing them from our attention! Prophecy presents a brighter prospect for the church in the vista of the future. And though we of the present generation, die in the wilderness of doubt and partial consecration, our sunday schools, our missions, our revivals, and innumerable influences, are concurring, I trust, to bring on the stage a phalanx of more robust and vigorous Christians, on whom the Holy Spirit will confer his largest gifts, that through their means the empire of righteousness and peace, may be fully established over the soul and the society of man.

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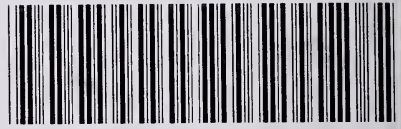
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